THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

THE Gifford Lectures in 1955 were given by Professor Rudolf BULTMANN of Marburg under the title of *History and Eschatology*. These are now available in book form,[1] and in them there is set forth an exposition of the meaning of history from the viewpoint of a Christian Existentialist.

The early chapters provide a review of the work of notable historians down the ages, and of philosophers who have sought to interpret the significance of history. The Biblical view, which regards history as a movement towards a God-appointed goal, is seen in sharp contrast with the view which treats history as a cyclical movement, ever returning to the same point and starting again. This is history without eschatology, without any final goal, and therefore meaningless.

BULTMANN'S own view is set forth at length in the later chapters of the book, but the reader meets an anticipation of it in his earlier exposition of Paul's thought. Paul's view of history is 'the expression of his view of man.' 'Paul can present the course of history from Adam, by way of the law, to Christ, in the form of an autobiographical "I" (Ro 7^{7-25a}).' It may be asked whether the ascription of this very individualistic view of history to Paul does justice to the theme of Ro 9–11, where Paul wrestles with the significance of events in the history of the people of Israel as a whole. It is, however, undoubtedly true that Paul, an evangelist rather than a philosopher, is primarily concerned with the individual person, for whom 'history is that by which man gains his real essence.'

For BULTMANN also history is almost identical with anthropology. Indeed the title of his book might well have been 'Human Life and Its Significance,' because for him the real meaning of history lies in its significance in the experience of the individual person.

It has long been known that BULTMANN is sceptical of the possibility of securing actual historical knowledge of the human life and ministry of Jesus. Our knowledge of it comes through the reports of other people, and what they record is, inevitably, not objectively true, but coloured by their presuppositions. This is also true of all history, claims BULTMANN, and the question is repeated: 'Is it possible to attain objective knowledge of history at all?' Though a categorical answer is not given, one feels that a negative one is implied. Dilthey's words are quoted, apparently with approval: 'The historian is not interested in raising the question of truth, but only to ask for the revelation of soul.' Approval is certainly given to Erich Franks when he writes: 'The object of historical knowledge is man himself in his subjective nature,' and also to R. G. Collingwood (whose 'Idea of History' is given special praise) who says 'History is thus the self-knowledge of the living mind.'

The 'core of history' is therefore man—not nations, or politics, or society or culture, but the individual human life. History is the sphere where man may attain 'genuineness of life'—or fail to attain it. This new quality of life is characterized primarily by 'freedom,' freedom from being the people we are into the possibility of becoming the people we were meant to be. It is here that the Christian Faith is of crucial importance because by it 'genuineness of life,' with its freedom from self, is offered to man by God as a gift. It can be received only as a gift.

Eschatology is a Biblical concept. Originally it meant the end of things in a temporal sense, but in essence it means the 'end' of things in the sense of the goal they aim to reach, the purpose they are intended to fulfil. History was meaningful for Biblical writers because they believed they knew the future end of history. Nothing has meaning which has not a goal and a purpose. The goal or end of history has appeared in Jesus Christ. He is the long-expected 'eschatological event.' His coming was the action of God by which God has set an end to the old world. He is a happening within history, an established fact of past time, but what makes Him continuingly significant is that He is also 'repeatedly present.' Therefore since the time of Christ every moment is 'eschatological,' that is (for BULTMANN) full of crucial significance, because in it man may become his true self, by making a proper response (a decision) to what God offers in Christ.

Clearly in this book the words 'history' and 'eschatology' are used in a specialized sense, and

[1] University of Edinburgh Press; 15s.

the reader must seek to understand the author's use of them even while he may feel its inadequacy. He will, in fact, not learn much about history in the sense of an honest painstaking endeavour to establish the facts of the past, and a humble, self-critical determination to assess their significance. Nor will he learn much about eschatology in the sense of that which awaits human life beyond this earthly scene. But he will find here much about human life itself, much about its fundamental significance, and much about the way that significance can be realized.

Some words from the closing paragraph of the book will illustrate the concern of the author, who is at heart, like the Apostle Paul himself, even more of an evangelist than he is a philosopher: 'The meaning in history lies always in the present, and when the present is conceived as the eschatological present by Christian faith the meaning in history is realized. . . . Always in your present lies the meaning in history, and you cannot see it as a spectator, but only in your responsible decisions. In every moment slumbers the possibility of being the eschatological moment. You must awaken it.'

The really moving books are the books which are written by men who not only see what is wrong in any given situation, but who have passionately tried to put it right. Such a book is *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World*, by Mr. Alan Walker.[1] It springs out of the author's experience in the Australian Mission to the Nation Campaign, and out of his further evangelistic work in America.

Mr. Walker is not unappreciative of the value of what he calls nineteenth-century evangelism, but he sees in it certain grave omissions and certain serious faults. These faults are: 'A message which stops short of being the whole gospel for the whole world; an intellectual presentation of the faith which denies or ignores the great gains of Biblical scholarship of the last one hundred years; a personal evangelism which has no social dynamic; an inadequate relationship with the Church as the body of Christ; an exaggerated trust in mass meetings as such, and a calling for commitment to Christ in an emotional atmosphere with a limited intellectual and specific content.' There, then, is the charge, and there are few who would deny its truth.

None the less, the task of evangelism remains. Emil Brunner rightly says: 'The Church exists by Mission as a fire by burning.' Not only does the task remain; it is a task which in this present age is imperative. 'Truth always contends with falsehood for the souls of men,' but in this present age we are in what Mr. Walker calls *kairos* time, crisis time. John Mackay of Princeton Seminary said: 'This is one of God's spring-times, one of His terrible spring-times. . . . Spring-time can be a time of devastating floods as well as of fragrance and of flowers.' There is a crisis, a *kairos*, in *economic affairs*. 'Millions of people have quietly made up their minds that they are not again going to accept a continuing exclusion from a larger share in the wealth of the world.' A Church which 'is fatefully weighted down with great possessions' will find it impossible to reach the ordinary people in the new age. There is a crisis, a *kairos*, in *racial relationships*. 'It is a disturbing thought to remember that the reception of personal salvation for millions of people may be determined by the degree to which the Christian Church fights for the modification of the "White Australia" policy, the ending of the segregation of the Negro in American life, the abandonment of the tragic apartheid policy in South Africa, and the expunging of the lingering colonialism of France and Great Britain. Yet, that is the truth!' There is a crisis, a *kairos*, in the question of *war*. 'Never again will any government be able to count on a united public opinion to support it in war, atomic war.' Yet on the other hand there is a growing *wistfulness*. 'Disappointed with so much else, many are ready to take a second look at the Christian faith.'

In face of all this Mr. Walker lists the doctrines which he believes to be of special relevance to the present predicament of mankind. 'They are: the sovereignty of God, the love of God for individual persons, the Christian doctrine of man, the doctrine of the Church, the Holy Spirit, the Kingdom of God as expressing the rule of Christ over all life, and the saviourhood of Jesus Christ.'

Of the practical methods of evangelism in this modern situation Mr. Walker has much that is helpful to say; but in particular he stresses *the Price of Evangelism*. If the modern situation is to be faced with this full gospel the cost is not slight. 'There is no achievement without sacrifice.' Evangelism demands a wrestling with God 'for the message He would have spoken for our time.' 'Evangelism means seeking to place men and women in a living relationship with the Spirit of God.' It is much more than introducing people to allegiance to an institution called the Church; it means bringing them to an inner acceptance and a personal experience of Jesus Christ.

For the Christian this means 'readiness to move to the lonely places of Christian leadership.' This is not easy, for, as Henry Sloane Coffin has pointed out, 'society treats the person who rises above its standards in exactly the same way as it treats the

[1] Abingdon Press; $2·00.

person who falls below its standards.' There were three crosses on Calvary—on one there hung the Son of God, and on the other two thieves. This evangelism aims to transform society, and that cannot even begin to happen 'without Christians being ready to become a revolutionary ferment at the heart of society.' 'After all the *status quo* is always wrong, because no society is Christian.' 'If a Christian has nothing more to say on peace and war, on the problems of race, on economic structure than the newspaper editor and columnist and the average talk of our time, then he has scarcely come near to the mind of Christ.'

Social witness is at one and the same time the preparation for evangelism and the consequence of it. The evangelist whose only comment on the great social problems of the time is 'No comment' may 'save trouble for himself, but he has no full saving word for this generation.' The evangelist must pay the price of identification with people. The Suffering Messiah was 'numbered with the transgressors.' He must say: 'While there is a lower class, I am in it. While there is a criminal element, I am of it. While there is a soul in prison, I am not free.'

There is a price of faithfulness to be paid. The relationship between 'the unexhilarating day-to-day tasks of discipleship and the coming of the Kingdom must be seen.' That faithfulness can only be attained in Christ. As George Tyrrell said: 'Again and again I have been tempted to give up the struggle but always the figure of a strange man on a cross has sent me back to my task.' There is the cost of prayer—personal and corporate—which is the most difficult and costly activity of the Christian life. And, finally, there is 'the costliness of calling men to full surrender to Jesus Christ.' That is the kind of preaching which takes a man's very life blood.

There is no doubt that this is a moving book. We have not indicated at all the practical methods which it outlines as having been proved and tried. The effect of this book on the reader is not only to summon him to the task of evangelism. It is also to challenge him to examine himself and his Church to see whether he and it are fit to be weapons in the hand of God. It makes us ask whether we ourselves have sufficiently found Christ to bring others to Him.

The Religious Significance of the Theophany in the Book of Job

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I

The speeches of Job, like the psalms of lamentation which often include a 'negative confession' protesting the author's innocence as Job does, belong to the literary *genre* of lyrical poetry; they express the poet's own mind and particularly his emotions. The prose prologue indicates objectively the external physical conditions of Job's sufferings—the loss of property, the family bereavement and the bodily disease. The poetic speeches of the friends reveal some of the subjective conditions of Job's sufferings—the thoughts, true or false, that press into the sufferer's mind as it were from outside, and, however much he repels them, become at times scarcely distinguishable from his own ponderings. Such thoughts are not the reasoned arguments that we find in a philosophical dialogue or even in a Greek tragedy, and we need not expect logical coherence or cogency of conclusion in the cries of a man in pain. The thinking of Job is not philosophical debate about the problem of suffering; it is the existential thinking of a poet, in which his whole being is involved, but which is deprived of almost all its logicality by the intensity of his pain.

II

If the Book of Job had ended, as some think it originally did, with ch. 31,[1] all we could have said about it is that it is a very great lyrical poem expressing the agony of an innocent sufferer. This book, however, differs from other lyrical poetry in ending with a poem expressing God's response to the poet's emotional outbursts. The theophany in chs. 38 to 41 is for religion the most significant as well as the most difficult part of the Book. The speech of Yahweh, whether it be the work of the author of Job's speeches or of another, is, like them, poetry. Like most poetry it is full of allusions to the ancient mythology of the author's race and culture. *Leviathan* is an obvious example and one about which knowledge is gradually increasing,[2] and there may be similar allusions throughout the speech, which we cannot grasp. Again we do not have here the considered answers of Yahweh to a set of philosophical questions about the suffering of the innocent. 'God does not say a word about the

[1] The speeches of Elihu are generally taken to be a later and not very helpful addition.

[2] Cf. J. B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 137, 138.

guilt or the innocence of Job; He does not say a word about the law of retribution in this world; He does not say a word about the justice or the alleged injustice of God.'[1] Renan puts it thus: 'God appears at the end not as in classical drama to solve an enigma, but to show in still more vivid ways its unfathomable depth.'[2] Indeed, if God had answered Job with a philosophical solution of the problem, in particular the solution offered in the prologue, it would not have changed Job's outlook or relieved his misery. Of course, Job, like the rest of us, did *not* know what was going on in the heavenly courts, but, if he had been told that Yahweh had accepted the Satan's challenge and was testing Job's loyalty under suffering, the explanation might possibly have satisfied Job during his years of prosperity, but now he would have surely cried out, 'Why, oh why, does God choose me His faithful servant for this trial?' Another man, as Job actually said, 'dies in full prosperity, being wholly at ease and secure, his body full of fat and the marrow of his bones moist.'[3] Why did God not make trial of a man like that rather than of the upright Job? It is part of Job's wretchedness that he cannot understand why God has picked him out. 'Why dost thou hide thy face, and count me as thy enemy?'[4]

What then did the theophany do for Job?

(1) Most simply, it took Job's mind away from himself and his 'tenacious self-concern,' from 'the self-centredness which permeates his well-doing.'[5] This is something difficult to accomplish in any sufferer. God appears to succeed by calling Job to look at the wonders of Nature, not its gentler aspects like the flowers of the field and the birds of the air to which our Lord drew attention, but the grander and more savage aspects of Nature—the mystery of Creation, the mastery of the tides, the splendour of the dawn, the sources of storm and flood, the paths of the heavenly bodies and, in more detail, the mysterious ways of wild animals, culminating in the pictures of the monsters, Behemoth and Leviathan; from considerations of both language and appropriateness these appear to me to be an integral part of the theophany. (It is tempting to speculate on the identity of these animals, whether they are the traditional elephant and whale of St. Thomas Aquinas and Calvin, or whether they are the hippopotamus and crocodile of modern commentators or whether Leviathan is really the dolphin, which Eerdmans has pushed back into the sea by transferring some of his verses to the story of Behemoth. But surely much more important than their identity is the fact that Behemoth and Leviathan were deep in the subconscious mythology of the race.[6]) Here we have something that is well-known to modern man, the healing of soul that comes from the contemplation of the natural world, and the sublime and curious are the parts of Nature which are most likely to take the self-centred man out of himself. In much of the theophany Nature is pictured without man having any part in it; it is something to which man can turn his gaze without reminding himself of his own problems and troubles. The rain falls and the grass grows where no man is,[7] and in the description of the beasts their independence of man is sometimes emphasized.[8] We can accept this function of the theophany, but not to the exclusion of others. God was certainly taking Job out of himself by displaying to him the marvels of Nature. It is true that we Christians have a more excellent way; the contemplation of the Cross of Christ has more healing power than the contemplation of Behemoth and Leviathan.

(2) Many commentators have seen in Yahweh's speech a demonstration of the inscrutable wisdom of God—even a Semitic substitute for the argument of Paley's Evidences. If God is wise enough to control such a mysterious universe and such untameable monsters, Job has no reason to question His wisdom in inflicting suffering on innocent men. As Calvin puts it, 'He knoweth how to govern; He is no young beginner!'[9] The wisdom of God is more clearly demonstrated in the Wisdom poem of ch. 28 and in the short speech on the moral government of the universe at the beginning of ch. 40, both of which are taken by some scholars to be additions made by pious editors. We have certainly here no teleological argument proceeding from the orderliness of Nature to the wisdom of the Creator; the nature of the theophany is far from orderly. The wisdom of God here displayed is of a kind that we in the West scarcely recognise as wisdom. As Renan puts it, 'The Greek sees the divine in what is harmonious and clear; the Semite sees God in what is monstrous and obscure.'[10] The wisdom of the theophany is that of the Semites, not that of the Greeks or of our modern selves.

(3) What the theophany displays supremely is

[1] J. Lindblom, *La Composition du Livre de Job*, § 5 (tr.).

[2] E. Renan, *Le Livre de Job*, p. lxiii. (tr.).

[3] Job $21^{23.\ 24}$.

[4] Job 13^{24}.

[5] H. Knight, 'Job,' in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, ix. 70–72.

[6] See *e.g.*, Book of Enoch $60^{7.\ 8}$, 4 Ezra $6^{49\text{-}52}$, Apocalypse of Baruch 11^{29}.

[7] Job $38^{26.\ 27}$.

[8] Job $39^{7.\ 9}$ $41^{1\text{-}8}$.

[9] J. Calvin, *Sermons on the Book of Job* [tr., A. Golding], 773.

[10] E. Renan, *op. cit.*, p. lxxvi.

the tremendous mystery of God. Its power does not lie in the evidences it gives of God's reasonableness. Its reasons are what Calvin calls 'roving reasons' [1] which 'ravish' the heart rather than produce clear intellectual convictions. Otto gives the classic exposition of this aspect. 'In the last resort it relies on something quite different from anything that can be exhaustively rendered in rational concepts, namely, on the sheer absolute wondrousness that transcends thought, on the *mysterium*, presented in its pure non-rational form. All the various examples from Nature speak very plainly in this sense. The eagle . . . is in truth no evidence for the *teleological* wisdom that "prepares all cunningly and well," but is rather the creature of *strangeness* and *marvel*, in whom the wondrousness of the creator becomes apparent. And the same is true of the ostrich (39^{13-18}) with its *inexplicable* instincts. The ostrich is indeed, as here depicted, and "rationally" considered, a crucial difficulty rather than an evidence of wisdom, and it affords singularly little help if we are seeking *purpose* in Nature. . . . It is the same with the "wild ass" (*v.* 5) and the unicorn (*v.* 9). These are beasts, whose complete . . . negation of purposiveness is truly magnificently depicted; but, nevertheless, with their mysterious instincts and their inexplicable behaviour, this very negation of purpose becomes a thing of baffling significance. . . . What is meant is the *mysterium*, not as mysterious simply, but at the same time as "fascinating" and "august"; and, here too, these latter meanings live, not in any explicit concepts, but in the tone, the enthusiasm, in the very rhythm of the entire exposition. . . . That of which we are conscious is rather an *intrinsic value* in the incomprehensible—a value inexpressible, positive, and "fascinating."' [2]

This passage from Otto, sound and suggestive as it is, does not lay sufficient emphasis on two facts—the majesty of God and the fear aroused in man. Calvin reminds us that, as we read this, we have 'good cause to hold down our heads and to worship his high majesty which showeth itself in those wild beasts.' [3] Calvin is probably right too in supposing that the author intended the heart of Job to be moved to terror by what he saw, particularly those monsters Behemoth and Leviathan, although he moralizes about it in a way that the author of Job would not have done. 'Now then, if we tremble at the sight of a beast, should we play the bold fellows against God to contend with him.' [4] The realization of the majesty of God has, as its corollary, the realization of man's own insignificance. 'Behold,' says Job in his first reply, 'I am of small account, what shall I answer thee?' [5] God's strange works in Nature have compelled Job to realize his own unimportance, and this is a great change in one who had been prepared to meet God almost as an equal.[6]

The mystery of the theophany may be enhanced by its echoes of an ancient cosmic struggle in which man was involved, but in which Yahweh was still more involved. 'The cosmos,' writes Steinmann, 'has about it something frightful and inhuman, bestial and dreadful, to which man is bound. Into the speech of God there comes a breath of terror, which recalls the cruel age of the ancient world—the struggle of man, himself scarcely escaped from animality, against mythological but living beasts. In such circumstances the idea of the rights of man sounds somewhat absurd to an astronomer, a palaeontologist or a naturalist. Man seems no more than one beast among others lost in a nature that devours and is devoured. And this nature attains order only through the power of a Creator, whose purposes remain mysterious.' [7] Edmund Jacob in his *Old Testament Theology* goes still further in the direction of mythology: 'From the serpent of Genesis to the beasts of Daniel, the forces of evil are symbolized by powerful animals; this is why we think that the image of God (in man) and (his) domination over the animals imply also, to a certain extent, a domination over evil. . . . God wishes to show Job how difficult it is to control the world with beasts so extraordinary and so mysterious, who are afraid of nothing and against whom an unceasing warfare must be fought. Applying this to his own case, Job will be able to draw the conclusion, not only that God is not unjust in failing to concern Himself with Job (since He Himself is engaged at a higher level in the struggle against evil), but that Job himself will find the solution to evil only by mastering it.' [8] Jacob sees in God's words in ch. 40, *vv.* 5 to 11 not irony, as most commentators do, but a challenge to Job to play his part in the overcoming of evil. The value of these two modern interpretations lies in the way in which they put evil and suffering right at the heart of this mysterious universe which the language of myth tries to reveal. Jacob is certainly wrong, however, in suggesting that God has not yet attained complete mastery over the monsters; the theophany makes it repeatedly clear that He is their master [9]; indeed one can almost detect a note of exultant joy in God's handling of such wonderful creatures.

[1] J. Calvin, *op. cit.*, 788.

[2] R. Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, tr. J. W. Harvey, 81–83.

[3] J. Calvin, *op. cit.*, 799.

[4] *Ib.*, 800.

[5] Job 40^{4}.

[6] Job 31^{37}.

[7] J. Steinmann, *Le Livre de Job*, 295 (tr.).

[8] E. Jacob, *Théologie de L'Ancien Testament*, 138 f. (tr.).

[9] Job $40^{15, 19}$ 41^{11}.

(4) Through all this experience Job had a vision of God Himself, which the author does not describe, because it was literally ineffable, something that could not be put into words. 'I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee.' [1] We need not suppose that Job learned new facts about God: these could have been put into words; what he realized was the Divine greatness, which threw himself and his troubles into complete insignificance. George Macdonald, the novelist, thus interprets it, 'Seeing God, Job forgets all he wanted to say, all he thought he would say if he could but see Him. . . . Job had his desire; he saw the face of God—and abhorred himself in dust and ashes.' [2] It is notorious that the mystics have come to the vision of God by strange roads, none perhaps stranger than Behemoth and Leviathan.

III

What has this theophany to give to our religious thinking to-day?

(1) I believe that it has something to tell us of the right attitude in which to approach God. Calvin found much on this matter in Job with which to exhort his readers. His sixteenth-century English translator makes him condemn those who would 'play hail-fellow-well-met with God.' He makes Yahweh say, 'Why set up your bristles against Me?', or again he queries, 'How dare we lift up our neb against our Maker?' [3] An over-familiarity with God, such as still sometimes appears in extempore public prayers, will not stand up to the last chapters of Job. There is a more definitely theological problem, whether we can still use the language of the law-court in talking of our relations to God, as Job did before the theophany. Even St. Paul, who claimed that he was no longer under the law,[4] still continued to use such language. 'Justification' is a legal term, although it must be interpreted by Jewish ideas of the judge as vindicator and helper more than by strictly forensic Roman ideas. I should be inclined to think that this represents a failure on St. Paul's part to abandon the Jewish language to which he had been accustomed, were it not for the fact that our Lord Himself uses the figures of trial and judgment. Does the picture of the Father welcoming the prodigal son need to be supplemented by the picture of the Judge on the great white throne? Job in the vision of God certainly found a judgment on himself, but it was a judgment in terms of personal rather than legal relations; 'therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' [5]

(2) This moment of self-abasement appears to be characteristic of the experience of the 'twice-born.' The older revivalists used to bring people to this moment by awaking in them the fear of the wrath of God and of hell-fire, and Calvin and others hold that one effect of the theophany was to strike terror into the heart of Job. Job's experience, however, was one of awe and self-abasement rather than that abject terror which usually retains and sometimes exaggerates the self-centredness, which Job had now lost. A better analogy might be the experience described by Heidegger, when, after the struggles and fears of *Angst*, 'instead of fleeing from death, man is to look death in the face, and more than that, to accept and choose it as his own pre-eminent possibility.' [6] To look on the face of death is a poor substitute for Job's looking on the face of God, and to accept and choose death is an existentialist travesty of that 'dying to self,' which Job describes in the words, 'I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.' Should we not still be finding in the mysteries of Nature the awful majesty of God, and proclaiming it so that men, catching Job's vision, will abhor themselves and know the need of a Saviour?

(3) The theophany certainly summons us to larger views of God. Unfortunately when modern men speak of larger views of God, they commonly go mathematical and mystify us with light-years and the like, or they go sentimental and preach universalism. Here poetry, including this poem of Job, is a safer instructor than either mathematics or sentiment, for poetry conveys to us what Renan calls in a memorable phrase '*l'insondable profondeur*' of God. Our view of God must be large enough to make a place for the wonders and absurdities of Nature, even those untamed monsters, Behemoth and Leviathan; it must be large enough to give some significance to the sufferings of Job and of all the innocents; it must be large enough to provide for 'the inescapable character of man's relation to God' [7] (which a recent writer regards as the great theme of the Book of Job); and it must be large enough to find room for that cry on the Cross, in which, with a strange insight, the psychologist Jung finds the one adequate answer to Job—'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' [8]

[1] Job 42^5.

[2] C. S. Lewis, *George Macdonald—An Anthology*, quotations 153 and 154.

[3] Calvin, *op. cit.*, 753, 754, 780.

[4] Ro 6^{14}.

[5] Job 42^6.

[6] J. Macquarrie, *An Existentialist Theology*, 126.

[7] H. Knight, *op. cit.*, 63.

[8] C. G. Jung, *Answer to Job*, 74.

Myth and the New Testament

How Far Does Myth Enter into the New Testament?

By the Reverend C. K. Barrett, D.D., The University of Durham

In the previous article a historical sketch of the use of myth in New Testament times was given, and this, together with a study of the word μῦθος in the New Testament itself, served to raise the general question of the employment of mythological material by the New Testament writers. The author of the Pastoral Epistles repudiated myth altogether, but the very violence of his repudiation proves that—for good or ill—other Christians made use of it. How far does myth enter into the New Testament? Is there, in fact, notwithstanding the Pastorals, a legitimate Christian use of mythology?

In handling such a question as this, nothing is more important than a careful definition of the terms employed, and before going further I must state exactly what I take the word myth to mean.[1] By myth I understand theology cast in the form of narrative; a story in which some of the actors are supernatural beings, and the relations between gods, men, and devils are set out as events. The interest may lie primarily in the gods, as when we read that Zeus banished his father Cronus; it may lie primarily in men, as when the greatness of an Alexander or an Augustus is accounted for by the tale of intercourse between a god and a human mother, and a supernatural birth; or it may lie in the relation between gods and men, as in the myth of Prometheus. Myths are of different kinds, and they have been interpreted in different ways,[2] but always they are stories, and stories told not with purely narrative, or purely moral, interest, but in order to set forth some kind of theological relationship.

If I may be allowed this definition of myth I must proceed to consider, in terms of my definition, the relation of myth to the New Testament. This question may take two forms.

(1) The form it takes in the popular mind—and it is a perfectly proper form; the popular mind has sound instincts which often lead it to ask pertinent and difficult questions—is the question: Are the stories of the New Testament myths? Of course, when this question is asked, the questioner has generally made up his mind that a myth is an unhistorical tale, and what he wants to know is whether the New Testament is 'true,' that is, historically veracious. It is the more important to bear carefully in mind the definition with which one is working. On the definition that I have already given, I am bound to answer immediately, a good deal of the New Testament is mythical in form; that is, it contains narratives whose primary purpose is to set forth theological relationships. One thinks at once of the story of the Baptism of Jesus, which stands at the head of Mark in order that the reader may know at once that the subject of the story, Jesus of Nazareth, was the Son of God, marked out by the gift of the Spirit as the Lord's Messiah. Of course, in giving this reply, logically complete as it is, I have not really answered the questioner, because in my definition of myth there is nothing to tell him whether the events narrated 'really happened' or not. It is easy to lay down a rough and ready rule here. If you believe, *a priori*, in the real existence of the supernatural beings who take part in the myth, and if what the story teaches about them is consistent with their character, as known or believed, then, on your presuppositions, there is no reason why the myth should not also be sound history. If, however, you do not so believe, you will find the story incredible. For example, modern men do not believe that the well-known myths about Heracles really took place, because they do not believe in the existence of that hero. Those on the other hand who believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God will not *a priori* find it impossible to believe that He was baptized, that the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and that God Himself declared, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.' The belief does not itself settle the historical question; but it does leave it open.

The question which is thus left open is a very delicate one, to which no rough and ready answer is possible. True beliefs (if we are agreed that we know what is true and ought to be believed) may

[1] Other definitions have of course equal, or higher, authority, though it would be very convenient if an agreed use of myth could be found. My definition applies to my own essay, and to nothing else.

[2] See the earlier article (The Expository Times, lxviii. [August, 1957], 345).

be set forth in unhistorical narratives, constructed, consciously or unconsciously, for the purpose. It is quite possible that one myth (understood as I have defined the word) may be both theologically and historically true, and that another may be theologically true and historically fictitious. I shall return to this question later.

The question which we have just looked at, and deferred, is the question which the word myth is likely to arouse in the lay mind. But myth raises another question, which we must have before us.

(2) Behind the New Testament literature and the New Testament faith stands a vast background, which may not inaccurately be described as mythological. For many centuries the Greeks, and other races, had told stories about their divinities, many of them at first, perhaps, aetiological myths, subsequently interpreted in many different ways. Some of them had long been bound up with cultus, as the myth of Demeter at Eleusis. More mythological and cultic material was traversing the Hellenistic world at the time when the Church was born. Whether or not this material should be called 'gnostic' depends primarily on how one defines gnosticism. One definition is perhaps as much as can fairly be asked for in one article; but I may allow myself to say that I believe the New Testament itself to contain sufficient evidence to prove that, when it was written, there were some who thought they had found salvation because they could say, I know; and that is gnosticism. What they knew, or thought they knew, was some truth about God, or the spirit-world, almost certainly mythologically expressed.

What, then, we must ask, is the attitude of the New Testament, not merely of its historians but of its theologians, to this mythological background? At the close of last month's article we noticed the attitude of the author of the Pastorals. He who would be true to the faithful sayings in which sound doctrine was enshrined must have nothing to do with myths—at least, with those myths the author has in mind. But we must raise again the question with which that article concluded: Was this the only possible line for a Christian to follow? It is natural here to turn to the Fourth Gospel, which has been the centre of much recent controversy over the New Testament, gnosticism, and mythology. A brief study of this Gospel will suggest some more general conclusions.

It will be well to make at the outset two preliminary points.

(1) John shows no acquaintance at all with the narrative myths of antiquity. There were Christians who, like the Jew Philo, were thoroughly acquainted with this material. Justin, for example, can quote plenty of it, both by way of parallel and of contrast with the New Testament stories. John shows no interest in these myths from either point of view.[1] They might as well not exist.

(2) We know of two great bodies of literary material which lie behind the Fourth Gospel—the Old Testament and the Synoptic tradition. Neither of these does John handle in what could be called a mythological way.

His use of the Old Testament is quite different from Philo's. To Philo the Old Testament is in effect much the same as what Homer and the well-known stock of Greek mythology were to many a Hellenistic writer. Later Christian writers adopted this use of the Old Testament; but John did not. He finds in the Old Testament straightforward predictions of what was to happen in the gospel story, and he shows great insight into, and creative and constructive handling of the themes of Old Testament theology. But he does not treat the Old Testament stories as myths which call for allegorical treatment. When, for example, he refers to the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness he does not say and he does not mean that the serpent was a *type* of Christ. He means what he says—that *as* the serpent was lifted up (that men might be healed by their faith in God), *so* Christ must be lifted up (that men may be saved by their faith in God).

John's treatment of the Synoptic tradition is akin to his treatment of the Old Testament. He does not simply repeat it; he first elicits its theological significance, and then retells the story in such a way that the theological significance is brought out unmistakably and unambiguously. But this is a process into which myth does not enter. The stories are not myths[2] when they reach the Fourth Evangelist, and, though he does not hesitate to refashion them, and to expound them, they are not myths when they leave his hands.

With these points in mind we shall not, I think, be prejudiced in favour of the view that this Gospel is built upon a mythological foundation. But the crucial question is still to come. Is there any substantial contact between John and the cosmic myths, which tell the story of man and the universe in terms of light and darkness, and recount the descent and ascent of a Redeemer or Revealer? I am not here concerned with literary contacts; is there contact in the realm of ideas?

Let me say at once that I think that Dr. Bultmann[3] has made out two points: (1) that there is

[1] This is not to deny that, for example, Dionysiac motives may be traced in Jn 2^{1-11}. The story itself is taken from Christian, not Dionysiac, tradition.

[2] It is worth noting that John omits (though he evidently knew) the Baptism, and the Transfiguration.

[3] See especially *Theology of the New Testament*, II. [1955], 10–14, 15–32, 75–92; especially 21, 76.

between John and the mythological material a certain community of theme—notably in the separation of light from darkness, and in the work of the Redeemer. 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not grasp it' ($1^{4f.}$). 'The bread of God is he that descends from heaven and gives life to the world' (6^{33}). (2) John has represented these themes in a far more Biblical form than the other sources in which we meet them. Cosmological dualism becomes the dualism of decision, in which man stands under the judgment of God. More important still, for him Jesus is still the 'historic' Jesus, the Word *made flesh*.

Is this process plausibly described as the 'Christianizing' of an Oriental mythological gnosis? On this score I should like to make an observation, which, if it is true, seems to be of some importance. The points at which John runs more or less parallel with mythological material are points at which he is also running parallel with earlier Christian tradition. This I can illustrate briefly over only three points.

(1) It is only in the opening verses of the Gospel that the Evangelist shows any interest in cosmology. There is no attempt in the Gospel, as there is, for example, in *Poimandres*, to use a cosmic story to account for man as he is. Man in John is what he is in the rest of the Bible, God's creature who has revolted against his Maker. It is of course quite true that the Prologue gives a cosmic setting to the Person of Christ. But herein John is indebted primarily to the Wisdom literature of Judaism, and to Paul's development of it.

(2) The theme of light and darkness is by no means peculiar to mythological literature. It is very much at home in eschatological and apocalyptic literature. An apt and now familiar illustration is provided by the Dead Sea Scroll called 'The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness.' There is, however, no need to go beyond the New Testament itself; such a passage as Ro 13^{11-14} is sufficient: 'The night is advanced, the day is near; let us therefore put off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. . . .'

(3) Finally, the figure of the Redeemer is also one which is familiar in apocalyptic literature, and under the same title which is used in a number of key-passages in John—the Son of man. The apocalyptic Son of man also is a heavenly figure, who ascends and descends, approaches and leaves the throne of God. And he, too, is to be found in both Christian and non-Christian apocalypses.

It is now time to pull this material together into a few brief conclusions, which will resume the questions set out above.

(1) First with regard to John. If it be true that the mythological contacts are matched by corresponding contacts with other material closer to the main line of Biblical thought, the most natural suggestion to make is that John began, not with the mythological but with the Biblical material, using however his knowledge of the extra-Biblical material to bring out more fully and persuasively the content of the tradition. This conclusion is supported by a striking observation made by Dr. Bultmann himself.[1] He notes with much truth that though in John Jesus is represented as the Revealer what He reveals is only—that He is the Revealer, the One in whom mankind is confronted by the living God, whose presence compels them to make a decision for or against Him. Now a gnostic revealer who reveals nothing at all is scarcely thinkable; the position is tolerable only if we may suppose that John is writing consciously within the Christian tradition.

(2) A second point of more general importance is this. The evidence we have glanced at (and, of course, this is only a fragment of the whole) suggests that where the New Testament shows substantial contacts with the stuff of mythology (as distinct from slighter formal parallels), these contacts have been mediated to it through the Jewish apocalyptic tradition, which had been in touch with the myths at an earlier stage. The intrinsic significance of this observation calls for a paper to itself; all we can note at present is that much of the New Testament mythology (if the term may be used) is second-hand, and that the characteristic New Testament world-view is not mythological but eschatological. The bearing of this upon the task of 'demythologizing' is another theme that calls for consideration but cannot receive it here.

(3) One more point calls for mention. It was noted in the earlier article that there existed in the Hellenistic age two ways in which myths were used: the ancient myths were interpreted; and preconceived truths were given mythological setting. What I have not observed in this period is a tendency to make new myths of a historical or quasi-historical kind. To say this is not, of course, to prove that the New Testament writers did not invent such myths, still less to establish the historical accuracy of everything contained in the New Testament. But it does suggest that in the New Testament event and interpretation are related to each other in a different way from that which is suggested by the language of myth. We cannot say either that the stories existed only as bare tales and that they themselves, by the processes of allegorical or mythological interpretation, created a theology, or that already existing theological

[1] *Op. cit.*, 66.

truths were given mythological expression by the creation *ex nihilo* of completely fictitious narratives. To the New Testament writers, event and interpretation were equally valid and real, and we cannot say that one is primary and the other secondary. For example, in the Baptism story to which I referred at the beginning of this article, we cannot say either, 'The apostles deduced from a natural event a supernatural (and therefore unjustified) conclusion'; or, 'The apostles believed somehow or other in the divinity of Christ, and made up a story to express it.' They believed both that Jesus was the Son of God, and that this fact became visible in real events. In other words, they believed that *in Jesus* myth and history coincided. Whether they were right or wrong in their belief is a question which neither the historian nor the philosopher, as such, is in a position to answer.

Literature

AUTHORITY

In what way does God 'secure to His Word an undoubted credit superior to all human opinion?' Our fathers read the Bible with complete confidence that this was the case. Professor John K. S. Reid has thrown a flood of light on the modern crisis of confidence *vis-à-vis* the Bible by this careful study of Reformation and post-Reformation understanding of the Bible—*The Authority of Scripture* (Methuen; 25s. net). Criticism, which raised questions about the form of the writings, opened the way for suspicion of error in the contents, and the suspicion was fed from the soil of the cultural conflict between science and religion which assumed the form of a clash between 'the two books,' Nature and Holy Scripture. The authority of Scripture became problematic because the prevailing view of that authority was inadequate. In his chapters on Calvin and on Luther and Protestant Orthodoxy, Professor Reid explores the mind of our forefathers. He brings out from Calvin the firmly non-magical view of Scripture. The sense in which it is God's Word does not exclude the fact of its being man's own word. Further, between this written Word of God and conviction there lies the work of the Holy Spirit. The locus of that authority which wins over men's hearts is not, therefore, in the recorded words, as was inadequately supposed when the crisis came. Luther's contentions are set in proper perspective by the light which comes from Calvin. The authority which God lends to Scripture as His Word is not disposed between rival claimants—the Church, the written record, the personality of the individual reader. It is an authority 'objectively grounded, spiritually commended and subjectively acknowledged.' With meticulous care and courtesy Professor Reid charges the Roman Church with error when it looks for the objective grounding in what is really the spiritual commendation of the Church; just as Rationalists and Pietists are chargeable with error when they look for it in the subjective factor of reason in the one case or of that Divine spark which does duty for Luther's 'faith' in the other. He then examines the two directions in which modern thinkers have tried to plot the problem by offering analyses in terms of inspiration or of revelation. The conclusion seems to be inescapable that the Bible's authority is guaranteed by some other quality than inspiration: 'it will be commended because of a more objective quality than inspiration and causally determining it.' Nor does discussion in terms of revelation take us the whole way. Scripture gives us the revelation through the prism of man's response, and this prism has two components: a record of how men have *understood* the pressure of God's revelation and of how they have *applied* what they understood. In the last two chapters the locus of the objective ground and guarantee is exposed, first by a report on Barth and Brunner and then by Professor Reid's own answer to the question: Why read the Bible? It is made clear how Barth represents a real advance on Calvin and not a retrogression to irrationalism. In securing credit to His Word, God certainly evokes a real hearing and reasoning on the reader's part, and Barth is acutely aware of all that is involved here for modern man. At the end of this scholarly study the reader is excellently equipped to work out his own confession of the Bible's authority. The story is developed with such power that he will find it hard to rest in fashionable positions congenial to the woolly-minded. Further, the book communicates an awareness, in awe and gratitude, of whose authority it is which makes Holy Scripture the word of life. But not all readers, perhaps, will find in the last chapter a ready-made confession. It is a valuable contribution to current discussion, to be set alongside others, some of which the author has rather surprisingly ignored. But as a contribution it is of a different order from the magisterial study offered, and uniquely offered, in the bulk of the book. The matters of crucial significance which are discussed

here are the Christocentric view of Scripture and the relation between witness and the presence of that to which witness is given. These are the theological themes, which tower above all psychological or cultural sub-themes, and which need to be elucidated if we are to grasp once more how the Bible becomes the Word of God by stated and steady appointment and thus *is* the Word of God ' not in the sense that God's Word is petrified in a dead record, but that the Bible itself is vivified by His living presence to convey what He has to say.'

W. A. WHITEHOUSE

THE VISIBLE WORDS OF GOD

Rumour in the academic underworld suggests that several theses are being written about one of the greatest, but also one of the most neglected of the Protestant Reformers, Peter Martyr. That is all to the good ; there is room for two or three good books about him, but no future work will quite take the place of the present study—*The Visible Words of God :* An Exposition of the Sacramental Theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli, A.D. 1500–1562, by Dr. Joseph C. McLelland, M.A., B.D. (Oliver and Boyd ; 22s. 6d. net)—which we warmly welcome and salute as a work of erudition and profound perception. Peter Martyr's distinguished career in the Roman Church in Italy may have been unknown to his turbulent Oxford audiences in the reign of Edward VI., and the author has done well to begin his volume with a biographical sketch, the ' portrait of an ecumenical Reformer,' Martyr the beloved teacher of John Jewell, and the only theologian whom Elizabeth I. personally invited to return here at the beginning of her reign. Dr. McLelland devotes most of his work, properly, to a massive exposition of Martyr's Sacramental doctrine and to an intriguing account of his doctrine of analogy which he finds to be the key to his theology. That Martyr's writings are so largely preoccupied with the sacraments is, he thinks, due to this doctrine, though one might suggest that the main reason after all was the time and place in which he wrote, for the Sacrament of the Altar was from 1530 onwards a dominating theme in Strasbourg and from 1547 onwards, in England also. Martyr, with Bucer and Musculus, made contributions to Reformed theology which the later concentration on Calvin has tended to hide. And here, abundantly illustrated from Martyr's many works, many of them forgotten and inaccessible, is a full exposition of a rich and many-sided eucharistic faith, so striking and important that one marvels at the omission of his writings from any library of Christian classics.

On Martyr's attitude to and use of the Fathers, and about his relation to Bucer and to Bucer's doctrine there are important appendices. I sometimes find Martyr more lucid and easy to read than Dr. McLelland, and I think he sometimes dresses the Reformer in modern ecumenical clothes, but these disputable criticisms are minor blemishes on a most important contribution to Reformation studies and to modern ecumenical theology.

GORDON RUPP

PASTORAL PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology, Religion and Human Need, by W. L. Carrington, M.D. (Epworth Press ; 30s. net), is the most exhaustive book, to my knowledge, on pastoral work. Even Dr. Paul Johnson's excellent volume and Goté Bergsten's ' Pastoral Psychology ' do not cover so large a ground. The author believes that ' there are many indications that we are at the beginning of a very great period of expansion in Christian pastoral work in which the educated and trained layman will find more and more opportunities for valuable service.' Marriage Councils, Youth Leadership, Almoners, Social Workers, etc., are opening up fields of Christian service. Hence ' This book is an attempt to give an account of the kind of pastoral ministry to which the Christian Church is being called in these days ' ; and has for its sub-title ' A Guide for Ministers, Doctors, Teachers and Social Workers.'

Far too many books on pastoral psychology seem to assume that the people the minister has to help are those with psycho-neurotic symptoms of one kind or another, as though we needed to be psychiatrically healed before we could be recognized as Christians. In this third section on *The Healing Ministry* Dr. Carrington, who is a psychiatrist, gives excellent advice on *Priestly Healing*, *Pastoral Healing through Counselling*, and also gives a chapter to outlining the chief psychotic diseases so that the pastor will recognize them and refer them to the specialist. He gives an excellent illustration of a patient who, failing to respond to laying on of hands, was restored after she had been encouraged to tell of her spiritual conflicts. This section is really an antidote to the extravagant claims so often made for Divine Healing, and yet gives the Church a real part in making man whole.

The first section is general in its exposition ; but in the second section dealing with *The Personal and Educational Ministry* we have a really excellent chapter on ' The Fine Art of Visiting and Interviewing People ' which will be of great help to those ministers who hold a ' vestry hour.' But Protestant people above all need to be trained in worship, prayer and in seeking the guidance of God ; and all our young people have an urgent need to be educated in Christian Marriage and

Parenthood, and our author provides a 'comprehensive plan to meet it.' Parents need to be trained on how to impart sex knowledge to the young, and to understand the adolescent; and there is outlined *the case of chastity*.

Marriage Counselling is now world-wide, and laymen and laywomen are among the most active members of such councils. They will find much to help them in a very difficult art in the chapter on 'Marriage Counselling.' To visit people and to visit the 'sick' need different techniques, if I may use the word. Guidance is provided in the last chapter of this section.

The Evangelistic Ministry is the subject of the last section which consists of one chapter. But it is a valuable section and a fitting close to a book which although expensive is worth every penny. Such knowledge should be the substance of pastoral lectures to the final year in every theological college.

J. G. McKenzie

THREE PAPER-BACKS

We have before us three little paper-covered books, all published by Messrs. Mowbray. Two of them are by the Rev. Richard Tatlock. *A Paraphrase of St. Mark* (4s. net) can be unhesitatingly recommended. The Gospel is broken up into passages for daily Bible reading. The Bishop of Stepney in a Foreword to this volume says of this paraphrase that 'it retains all the punch of the original.' He describes it as a 'forthright version in contemporary language and style suitable not only for private use but also for reading aloud.' These tributes and recommendations are thoroughly justified. This is one of these translations which make the gospel story come alive. It is to be hoped that many preachers and teachers, and many private students, will discover and use this unpretentious, but thoroughly scholarly, little volume.

From Mr. Tatlock's pen also comes *In My Father's House* (3s. 6d. net). This volume deals with the Christian Doctrine of the After-life, and includes readings and prayers. It may fairly be said that this is a fearless and an adventurous book, of an importance far beyond its size. Mr. Tatlock finds in Scripture a fourfold significance in death: 'The soul is separated from the body and "falls asleep"; the body is laid in the tomb to disintegrate and await the day when it will be clothed anew with a body of God's fashioning; the soul is judged and, in its "sleeping" state, becomes aware of its real tendency; and man, so to speak, finds a new probation in a life that is full of hope.' 'Hell,' writes Mr. Tatlock, 'is the eternal condition of those who have made relationship with God and their fellows an impossibility through lives which have destroyed love; Hell is the eternal condition where relationships-through-love have become unthinkable. . . . Heaven, on the other hand, is the eternal condition of those who have found real life in relationships-through-love with God and their fellows.' This is most certainly a stimulating book. It is not the kind of book which one wishes to criticize, because its aim is altogether to help. But it has perhaps two faults. It is apt to take Biblical pictures rather too literally, not by any means always, but only sometimes. And it is apt to overdo the idea of the unity of Scripture by drawing its evidence, in some cases, from the Old and the New Testaments alike. But, even if there are things in this book about which I would differ, I am quite certain that this is a book well worth reading. In fact, it gives more food for thought and more grounds for certainty than most books on this subject many times its size and cost.

Living with God, by Mr. E. W. Trueman Dicken (5s. net), is sub-titled 'An Introduction to the Practice of Prayer.' At a first reading this book gives the impression—and indeed the certainty—that it is written for members of the Anglican Church. Mr. Dicken writes of absolution: 'We are given a definite absolution, personal to ourselves, assuring us of God's forgiveness for our particular case. Our Lord said to His apostles: "Whosesoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained," and that same authority has been handed down from one bishop to another, and from each bishop to the priests he ordained, from the earliest times until now.' There will be not a few who will find considerable difficulty with that. But we should be very sorry if things like that prejudiced readers against this book. Mr. Dicken defines prayer thus: 'Praying is simply *being*, quite consciously and intentionally, with God.' There are two notable things about this book. It has a wealth of practical advice on how actually to pray. From that point of view it is of the greatest practical use. And further, Mr. Dicken knows and loves and can most effectively use and quote the works of the great devotional writers. To read this book is to be introduced over and over again to the princes of prayer throughout the ages.

William Barclay

LINGUISTIC PHILOSOPHY

The encounter between theology and the philosophical movement variously known as logical empiricism, linguistic analysis, or semantic philosophy has received increasing attention in the past few years. An important addition to the literature of the subject is made by the symposium *Faith and Logic—Oxford Essays in Philosophical Theology*,

edited by Basil Mitchell (Allen and Unwin; 21s. net).

The older philosophers of religion used to set out to prove something, let us say the existence of God. The contemporary philosopher is interested rather in meaning. How are religious statements used? What function do they perform? The contributors to the present volume—there are both philosophers and theologians among them—have been meeting to discuss questions of this kind over the past ten years, and they now present us with some tentative findings.

I. M. Crombie has taken as his theme, 'The Possibility of Theological Statements.' He rejects the line taken by some empiricists that religion does not involve us in metaphysics, and that a statement such as 'There is a God' is not a factual statement but simply a recommendation to behave in a certain way. For Crombie, religion does involve us in metaphysics. He holds that a statement such as the one quoted is a factual statement involving belief in God as a transcendent Being, and in a carefully reasoned essay he seeks to show that it is possible to make such statements meaningfully, in spite of the usual empiricist ban on metaphysics.

A different point of view is put forward by R. M. Hare in his essay, 'Religion and Morals.' He seeks a middle way beteeen Crombie's view that religious statements are factual and the view at the opposite extreme that religious statements are simply recommendations of moral policies. 'If we take religious language as a whole, it is too factual to be called specifically moral, and yet too closely bound up with our conduct to be called in the ordinary sense factual.' He argues that there is both a descriptive and a prescriptive element in our statements, and that this holds good even outside the field of religion. 'Without principles of some sort we do not get any facts.'

The other contributors are Austin Farrer, G. C. Stead, J. R. Lucas, Basil Mitchell and M. B. Foster. Among the subjects on which they write are revelation, grace, and the soul. All the essays in this volume contain close and sometimes subtle reasoning which demands careful reading, but fortunately most of the writers have a gift for vivid illustrations which help the reader on his way.

The challenge which linguistic philosophy offers to theological thinking is one that will have to be faced. It is one of the most radical challenges ever offered to theology, since it concerns not simply the truth but the very meaning of religious statements. These essays will help both towards a better understanding of what the challenge is and towards the possibility of solving some of the problems which it raises for religious thought.

JOHN MACQUARRIE

THEOLOGY AND THE SPIRIT

Under the title *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (S.C.M.; 12s. 6d. net) Professor George S. Hendry of the Chair of Systematic Theology in Princeton Seminary presents five lectures which he delivered in 1955 at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, U.S.A. The purpose of the lectures is described as an attempt 'to determine what must be the basic pattern of a Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit,' and for this purpose the author concentrates on five problems in this area which call for attention, and to which recent theological thought has given renewed importance. Following what he calls the 'chronological' order, that is, the order in which the issues engaged the attention of the Church the topical arrangement is (1) the Spirit and Christ, the New Testament issue; (2) the Spirit and God, the Trinitarian problem; (3) the Spirit and the Church, the problem within the great divisions of Western Christendom; (4) the Spirit and the Word, a topic special to our Reformed tradition; and (5) the Holy Spirit and the human spirit.

The range of topic is wide, and the book is relatively short, amounting in all to a hundred and seventeen pages. The author deserves to be congratulated on the good content he has been able to put into the five chapters, in which competent scholarship is combined with a clear, pungent style. There is in ch. 4 an admirable defence of the principle that 'Scripture must always be considered in its context,' the context being the faith of the Church wherein the Spirit makes the Word effective. The most matterful chapter perhaps is the last where the author pleads for a truly evangelical conception of grace. The grace that comes by the Spirit 'comes to man at his own level and engages him at the point of his freedom.' The temper of this whole chapter is reminiscent of John Oman's 'Grace and Personality.'

The emphasis throughout this book is very mainly upon the 'functional' character of the Spirit. 'The Spirit is God's knowledge of Himself.' This appears basic for the author, as is also the conclusion of ch. 1 that the New Testament 'knows no work of the Spirit except in relation to the historical manifestation of Christ.' From this angle Dr. Hendry approaches the topic in the second chapter, the Trinitarian problem. In view of his quest for 'a basic pattern' of doctrine this chapter would have been more fitting at the end. As it stands we found it difficult to assess. It gives the impression that the ontological approach and consideration is a mistake. In spite of the particular points at which he expresses dissent from Barth, Ferré and Tillich, it may be contended that they are trying with the doctrinal symbols to do

justice to the dynamic depths of the Divine Life, and to the reality of revelation not only as knowledge but as participation in His Life.

The reviewer is not sure what basic pattern does emerge (for doctrinal purposes) from the form in which the separate topics are presented.

J. Macleod

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

The Rev. Ronald S. Wallace in his book, *Elijah and Elisha* (Oliver and Boyd ; 16s. net), makes a plea for a renewal of interest in the Elijah and Elisha stories on the ground that the incidents they relate and the life-situations they describe may by analogy provide lessons for men of faith to-day. His book is a fine example of how this can be done ; it reveals deep insight and understanding. For instance, he notes the test of Elijah's faith involved in his being asked to believe that he is to rely on a starving widow of Zarephath for succour in a time of famine ; he submits that Elijah's encounter with Ahab who blamed him for the famine was ' a foreshadowing of what Jesus Christ did when He set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem ' ; and he describes the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal as ' the hidden Church ' who would have made things so much easier for Elijah if they had supported him in open protest. All this is well done.

But sometimes it is difficult to accept the analogy offered. The Shunammite woman of the Elisha story he portrays as refusing to believe that the death of her child could possibly be the will of God who had given him to her ; and Mr. Wallace adds : ' Such was the kind of faith that allowed God to fulfil His Word perfectly to the woman ' ; at certain times our faith is likewise tried and ' we have to decide whether we are going to insist before God that He shall fulfil His promises to us or whether we are going to let Him stop halfway.' Does not such ' insistence ' have the stuff of presumption in it ? To plead is one thing ; to insist is another.

Again, speaking of the miracles of the lost axe-head and the poisoned porridge, the record of which Mr. Wallace accepts as authentic as it stands, he says that ' God is prepared to do like things for ourselves.' The word ' like ' here is ambiguous. His next sentence says that these miracles are ' typical of what Jesus Christ would do within His Church to-day.' Does that not mean that it is not like things, but corresponding things in the spiritual sphere which Christ would do for us, not saving us, for example, from the physical effects of poison swallowed inadvertently, but from the effects of poisonous insinuations and slander ? Mr. Wallace might profitably have devoted more space to this part of his work in order to dêvelop more fully the issues involved in it.

John Mauchline

At a time when the volume of writing on the Fourth Gospel is swelling to almost unmanageable proportions a writer must be quite sure that he has something fresh to say. In *The Message of the Fourth Gospel* (Abingdon Press ; $3.50 net) Professor Eric L. Titus offers a ' fundamental approach ' based on six assumptions. Of these the most important are that the Gospel is interpretation, not history, and that the writer depends on previous Christian thought rather than on Hellenism. Taking much of what is usually treated in the Introduction for granted, Dr. Titus provides three introductory essays on Literary Method, Logos, and Spirit. He then proceeds to commentary, dealing not with verses but with ' units of material,' covering, as in ch. 6, a whole chapter. The effect is less radical than seems implied in the assumptions. There are some moments of insight, but all in all, Dr. Titus has not much to offer to the mind stocked from Hoskyns, Dodd, Barrett, and Lightfoot.

India has included many philosopher kings amongst her rulers, and the present Maharaja of Mysore, His Highness Sri Jaya Chamarajendra Wadiyar Bahadur, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., LL.D., is in a good tradition. He takes as the basis of his valuable study—*Dattātreya : The Way and the Goal* (Allen and Unwin ; 21s. net)—the god Dattātreya, regarding him as the embodiment of all the attributes necessary for the realization of the unity between God and man, a unity which is comprehensive rather than negative. He is thus a strong adherent of the Vedānta philosophy, the guiding principle of which is the identity of the soul of man with God, of the Ātman with Brahman, and he reaches his conclusions chiefly by way of an acute and careful analysis of two little-known works—the ' Avadhūta Gītā ' and the ' Jīvanmukta Gītā,' both associated with Dattātreya. Although he is an advocate of non-duality, the unity he seeks to realize is not abstract but a source of knowledge and power, giving peace and winning deliverance for the adherent from the confusions of the ordinary world. The ideal is ' equipoise ' or the harmony of differences, and, if at times he seems rather to be the victim of a passive tendency, this does not preclude elevation of thought and action, and a mysticism which is worthy of respect and in some ways is at least an approach to some of the deepest

teachings of Christianity. His view of the relation between the Divine and the human is definitely God-centred, and he emphasizes strongly the fundamental necessity of the grace of God, yet without destroying human responsibility.

Now for my National Service by Arnold S. Clark (Carey Kingsgate Press) is a little twelve-page booklet written for lads who are just about to go on National Service. It is written with simplicity, directness and sincerity; it says the things which need to be said, and honestly faces the problems. It is primarily written for those whose connexion is with the Baptist Church, but this is a booklet which could most profitably be put into the hands of a young man of any denomination or church. Ministers might well keep a stock of this book to hand to the young men of their congregations when they are called to National Service.

That prolific writer, Sir Arnold Lunn, has turned his attention to MRA and has written a book which can be warmly commended—*Enigma, A Study of Moral Re-Armament* (Longmans; 16s. net). He has taken the trouble to inform himself about his subject over a period of years and has drawn on first-hand notes of conversations and experiences. He writes as a friendly critic or, as the dust cover puts it, as a flying buttress, supporting the edifice from without, and, of course, he writes as a zealous Roman Catholic. One suspects that part of the motive of his writing is the fear that Rome may be about to forbid Roman Catholic participation in MRA. He is at pains to declare that not a few of the faithful have come back to the Church as a result of their contact with MRA, and that no Roman Catholics through such contact have gone over to Protestantism. In an appendix he gives the heads of a gentleman's agreement between some MRA leaders and some priests called together by the Bishop in whose diocese Caux lies.

Sir Arnold makes acute criticisms—anti-intellectual bias, naïve optimism, exaggerations, refusal to admit that Dr. Buchman has made mistakes, lack of proportion, etc.; but the weight of these is reduced when one realizes that MRA does not claim to be more than a gateway, not a church or a sect but a spiritual discipline which all can practise irrespective of their particular creed. That granted, one can rejoice in the good it has done and is doing in many quarters, and can pray that it may be richly guided and blessed.

The fifteenth volume in the 'World Christian Books' series is a popular commentary on the First Epistle of Peter, based on the R.S.V.—*A Letter of Wise Counsel*, by the Rev. Edward A. Maycock (Lutterworth Press; 2s. 6d. net). The commentary is well done, and it gains immensely from the apt references to conditions in Africa to-day, which out of his fifteen years' experience as a missionary in Nyasaland the author introduces at numerous points. This should prove a popular commentary in both senses, especially in the Younger Churches.

Dr. Leon Morris, the Vice-Principal of Ridley College, Melbourne, has written a commentary, *The Story of the Cross* (Marshall, Morgan and Scott; 8s. 6d. net), which is a model devotional Bible study of the Passion narrative according to Matthew—solemn, moving, heart-searching, direct and practical in its application. Critical and apologetic matter is deliberately left aside as irrelevant to the purpose of the book, and some may be surprised to realize how largely this course justifies itself.

The fact that Messrs. Pickering and Inglis have republished at 10s. 6d. net Dr. Andrew Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer* may indicate that this book, said during the past fifty years to have achieved a circulation almost reaching six figures, is in some sense a religious classic. It is pervaded by a simple, earnest and adoring piety.

The Divine Mission, by the Rt. Rev. James S. Thomson, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.C. (Ryerson Press, Toronto and Bailey Bros. and Swinfen, London; 8s. 6d. net), is a brief but highly suggestive contribution to the 'Theology of Missions.' It consists of three lectures to theological students by Dr. Thomson, Dean of the Faculty of Divinity at McGill University and, at present, Moderator of the General Council of the United Church of Canada. The author is himself aware that the subject 'requires fuller treatment and more adequate statement,' but these lectures are an interesting and stimulating introduction. Dr. Thomson's main contention (he confesses his debt to Kraemer) is that the Christian mission does not present to the world one more religion, parallel with others; rather it proclaims the positive fact of God's approach to man, in all history—but particularly in the history of Israel—in Christ, in the work of the Holy Spirit. God Himself in His outgoing love is, so to speak, a missionary God; Jesus, by the Incarnation and Atonement, was the first missionary. In Him is the answer to man's quest for God; in Him God seeks men. He fulfils and judges all 'religions.'

These lectures are eloquent—almost too eloquent—and impressive, but they touch on many questions which cannot be adequately discussed within such a brief compass, and it is to be hoped that Dr. Thomson will at some future date set forth

his thinking on this fundamental subject with greater amplitude.

Plato and the Christians, by Canon Adam Fox, Archdeacon of Westminster (S.C.M. ; 21s. net) is a most scholarly book. Archdeacon Fox has read through Plato and has discovered more than one hundred and twenty passages which have some kind of parallel in the New Testament. He groups his discoveries under four heads—God and Creation, Man and Destiny, The Foundations of Morality, Religion and the Church. To this he adds twenty-four aphorisms and an appendix on The Argument in regard to the Soul. There is an Introduction in which the difficulty of translating Plato, The Dialogue as Literature, and Platonism are discussed.

From the earliest times the defenders of Christianity saw in Plato a kindred spirit, and many of them claimed him as their own. The philosopher Numenius called Plato ' Moses in Attic dress ' ; the Christian Platonists of Alexandria are famous ; and in our own age Dean Inge and Archbishop Temple both knew and loved Plato.

Archdeacon Fox sums up what he calls Plato's contribution to Christianity : ' First and foremost a sense and picture of the reality and reasonableness of the unseen world. Without that no man is a Platonist. Next, many suggestions as to where and how to apply reason to what is basically a revealed religion. Thirdly, strong reinforcements to the promptings of conscience in the individual and in the community. Fourthly, a way most serviceable to religion of mingling a kind of poetry which is not actual poetry, and a kind of philosophy which is not actual philosophy, so as to produce what is almost, but not quite, theology.'

We think that this book is a labour of love. It will not in the nature of things find a great number of readers, but the scholar will read it and will remember, and the man who does not know Plato will read it and discover that God was also among the Greeks.

In *The Wisdom of the Fathers* (S.C.M. ; 8s. 6d. net) Dr. Erik Routley, the Mackennal Lecturer in Church History at Mansfield College, Oxford, introduces his readers to seven notable figures of the first eight Christian centuries and quotes considerable passages from their writings. His aim is to show that some of the questions that perplex Christians to-day presented themselves to the men of the Early Church too, and were given answers which may at least provide material for thought and discussion now. For instance, John of Damascus, the latest figure mentioned, and the Iconoclastic Controversy may seem very remote, but when you substitute visual aids for images much that he had to say comes to life in our situation. The author, carrying his learning lightly, and writing for the intelligent layman, has given us a fresh and stimulating book.

The Rev. Andrew W. Blackwood, now retired from the Chair of Homiletics in Princeton Theological Seminary, has long been known in America as himself a powerful preacher and a wise instructor of Divinity students. His latest book, *Planning a Year's Pulpit Work* (St. Andrew Press ; 18s. net), is his first work to appear as a British publication.

It is not a book on preaching. We have perhaps a super-abundance of such. It is designed to help Divinity students and parish ministers to plan their pulpit work. The author claims no infallibility for his plan—he is throwing out suggestions not laying down rules. He has found his own plan to work but allows every preacher full liberty to modify it. He is well aware of how the best-laid programme may miscarry. The times we live in are so uncertain that international or national or even parish emergencies may interrupt the scheme. His book, however, is full of sound practical wisdom based on his own experiences and the experience of others. The preacher's year should be divided into four seasons—September to Christmas, Christmas to Easter, Easter to Pentecost, Pentecost to September. During the first period the morning sermons might well be on Old Testament texts—Finding God in Bible History ; in the second there should be gospel sermons from the Life of Christ ; in the third gospel sermons about the Days after Easter ; and in the fourth Messages of Hope and Cheer or Life-Situations sermons. Suggestions are given for the Evening Service and Mid-week Bible readings. Whether one agrees with the author's scheme or not one at least will find a suggested procedure. Preaching is often too unsystematic. Were there more coherent courses of sermons not only would the congregation benefit, the preacher himself, working to a scheme, would find his task much easier. There are many valuable hints as to illustrations and much else.

We welcome the latest volume in the ' Treasury of Christian Books '—*Selected Letters of Samuel Rutherfurd*, edited by Dr. Hugh Martin (S.C.M. ; 8s. 6d. net). Rutherfurd appears better in a wise selection than in a complete issue, and Dr. Martin has not only made his selection representative but has deliberately chosen letters likely to prove interesting and helpful to present-day readers. He has added a Foreword and a few notes about some of Rutherfurd's correspondents, which give added point to the letters. Another useful feature is a two-page glossary of semi-obsolete terms, many of them unknown even to Scots.

Expository Problems

The Resurrection[1]

By the Reverend Canon H. E. W. Turner, D.D., Lightfoot Professor of Divinity in the University of Durham

Considerations of space preclude a comprehensive study of the documents involved. I may, however, be permitted to refer to the discussion in my book *Jesus Master and Lord.*

1. The Strands in the Evidence

(a) **The Empty Tomb.** This is not mentioned in our earliest witness, St. Paul (1 Co 15^{3-8} based upon earlier traditions probably of a catechetical nature). His silence is not, however, conclusive evidence against its historicity since as an 'Epistoller' rather than a 'Gospeller' he is concerned to apply the tradition to the problem before him, the nature of the Resurrection Body of Christians, and is therefore unlikely to appeal to an element in the tradition which is without parallel in the Christian Hope. The Empty Tomb is assumed in the Marcan narrative without the air of making a polemical point and passes from Mark into the other Gospels. In Jn 20 the tradition is confirmed and expanded. The Matthaean story of guards is designed merely to exclude a Jewish explanation of the original datum.

Granted, however, that the Empty Tomb is a substantial part of the Resurrection tradition, by itself it would remain dumb; it could not tell its own story. Other explanations might be offered and five alternative suggestions may be briefly discussed here.

(1) *Simple mistake.* Kirsopp Lake claimed that the real origin of the Empty Tomb tradition lay in a simple mistake on the part of the women. Coming to complete the burial rites in the half-light, they were met by a young man whom they mistook for an angel, and told 'He is not here (in the tomb which they were approaching); behold here (over there) is the place where they laid Him.' The reference to the Resurrection would therefore be a later addition to the story. But there is no evidence for the omission of the vital words, and the psychological background of the theory is unconvincing. The women are intent upon the completion of the burial rites (16^{1}) and exercised by the problem of the gravestone (16^{3}). Why do not they thank the young man for his information and enlist his aid in moving the stone? Their panic fear becomes totally inexplicable on this hypothesis.

(2) *Roman intervention.* This is in itself unlikely. As Mark's previous section (15^{42-47}) proves, Pilate's interest in the case ceases when he is convinced that Jesus is already dead. Normally those who died under crucifixion were cast into a common grave, but Pilate eases his conscience by handing over the body to a follower of Jesus for private burial.

(3) *Jewish intervention.* Once again the interests of the Jews lay in keeping the body in the Tomb. Provided that the guards were Temple police or some similar body, Matthew's story of the watch is not necessarily improbable. On the most sceptical hypothesis it at least points to the fundamental Jewish interests and a problem which required some explanation.

(4) *Fraud on the part of the disciples.* It is conceivable that Joseph of Arimathea might have repented of his generosity to the dead Master and ordered the body to be moved overnight. But this suggestion does not altogether ring true. It is not easy to follow the mind of a secret believer who plucks up courage to approach the governor and then changes his mind overnight, when the body is in the comparative safety of his own garden. Nor would 'an honourable counsellor' (member of the Sanhedrin) connive at a glaring breach of the Passover and Sabbath laws.

If the disciples themselves engineered the theft of the body to lend colour to the fulfilment of their Resurrection Hope, two grave difficulties (in addition to the disposal of the body) must be met. The Gospels carefully point out that our Lord's previous teaching on the Resurrection had passed unheeded. The errand of the women, their alarm, the response

[1] A. M. Ramsey, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*; P. Gardner Smith, *The Narratives of the Resurrection*; Kirsopp Lake, *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (radical); N. P. Williams, *The First Easter Morning* (an ingenious attempt at harmonization); Frank Morison, *Who Moved the Stone?* popular).

of the disciples to their message (Lk 24^{11}), all tell a consistent story of an unexpected occurrence. The conduct of the disciples both during the Forty Days and immediately after Pentecost does not suggest men who have a lie on their souls.

(5) *Resuscitation.* It has been suggested that our Lord did not really die on the Cross but recovered to a kind of half-life in the cool rest of the Tomb. Pilate certainly seems surprised that our Lord is already dead (Mk 15^{44}) but assures himself on the point on the evidence of the centurion. The severe physical and mental strain of the last week, and particularly the scourging (sometimes called 'the lesser death'), are relevant here. John adds a further detail (19^{34}) of some importance. Resuscitation might possibly explain some materialistic touches connected with the Post-Resurrection Appearances (Lk 24^{41-43}, Jn 20^{25-29} 21^{13}), but even here it is not the most probable explanation. The theory fails completely to account for the ringing note of assurance which the earliest disciples possessed. A resuscitated Jesus has none of the authority or assurance of a Risen Lord. A half-hanged Jesus living a half-life cannot support even half a gospel. The problem of how the resuscitated Jesus lived and where He died ultimately would still remain.

The Empty Tomb, then, still remains a basic part of the Resurrection tradition.

(b) **The Appearances.** These are catalogued by our earliest witness, St. Paul, in a more extensive form than that preserved in the gospel tradition. The list opens with an appearance to Cephas (Peter) which seems to be foreshadowed in Mk 16^{7} and may be recorded in Jn 21. 'Then to the Twelve' (presumably the Eleven) may be paralleled by Mt 28^{16-20}, Lk 24^{36-49}, Jn 20^{19-23}. Apart from the Apocryphal Gospels, nothing is recorded of an appearance to James, but it is almost necessary to explain the prominent position which he occupies in Ac 15. We know nothing of 'an appearance to five hundred brethren at once,' of whom 'the greater part remain until this day,' and the 'apostles' of *v.* 7b may possibly be a group wider than the Twelve. Finally St. Paul includes his vision on the Damascus Road, set rather apart from the rest almost as an event by itself.

There are two traditions in the Gospels as to the locale of the appearances. Mark (by implication), Matthew and Jn 21 record Galilee appearances, while Luke and Jn 20 place them in Jerusalem. The absence of any geographical indications in the Pauline catalogue is hardly surprising. Attempts to argue for the historicity of one tradition at the expense of the other are inconclusive. The rejection of the Jerusalem tradition, for example, would involve the setting aside of Luke as a credible witness, a high price to pay for any critical hypothesis. The theory of Resch and Hofmann that Galilee in this connexion must mean part of Jerusalem has not commended itself to most scholars; it certainly runs into difficulties in Jn 21. R. H. Lightfoot (following Lohmeyer) believed that the Appearances are described typically rather than geographically in the gospel tradition. Jerusalem appearances are evidential, Galilee appearances vocational. This distinction of type is broadly (though not wholly) true, and certainly both are needed. Naturally the disciples must be convinced that the Resurrection has in fact occurred before they are prepared and equipped for the tasks which this new fact imposes upon them. But the geographical labels attached to these appearances is precisely what we should expect. Evidential appearances should naturally take place as near in time and place to the event as possible, while questions of vocation can be reserved to another time and place. It is also questionable whether the Early Church was quite as uninterested in the geography of the gospel record as Lightfoot supposed. It is fallacious to conclude that because everything was not told nothing was remembered. The 'domestic probabilities' of the situation must also be taken into account. The disciples, cowed and puzzled, are harboured in Jerusalem for eight days (Jn 20). At the end of that time they return to Galilee, their home country, to await further orders. Finally they return to Jerusalem in good time for the Feast of Pentecost. Sufficient time for such movements is given by the forty days of Ac 1^{3}.

This reconstruction is, however, exposed to two difficulties, both arising from Luke, who provides this valuable chronological datum. The correction of Mk 16^{7} made in Lk 24^{6} appears to exclude as well as to ignore the Galilee tradition. The promise to meet the disciples in Galilee is here converted into a note of the place in which the Logion was delivered. A fully satisfactory solution is difficult to find, and I can do no better than to suggest that the Risen Lord here accommodates to the needs of the disciples. Beaten and cowed as they were, they remained at Jerusalem without sufficient faith to carry them to Galilee. So He meets them, as He meets us, where they are, and not where He would have them be. The second difficulty is concerned with the reference to the Ascension (if the text be correct) at the end of Lk 24. This suggests that the Ascension took place at the close of Easter Day, though it is Luke himself who provides the note of time required for the harmonization of the traditions as a whole in the opening pericope of his sequel. Two solutions (of which the former is by far the best) seem possible. Either Luke received additional informa-

tion after completing his Gospel which he incorporated in the most economical manner possible, or he was completing a papyrus roll and bunched his material together to save space.

Difficulty has often been occasioned by the nature of the Post-Resurrection Appearances. It has been claimed that they were only vouchsafed to believers, though the allusions to James, and indeed to Paul himself in 1 Corinthians, suggests certain qualifications. This would be consistent with our Lord's attitude to signs during His earthly life. 'Neither will they be persuaded if one rose from the dead' (Lk 16^{31}). The Risen Christ appears and disappears suddenly, but there are touches of a more materialistic kind about the Risen Body. It has been maintained that these represent a later stage in the tradition and are therefore less authentic but an alternative explanation is suggested by examination of what it means to have a body. If a body may be defined as the instrumentation of a self, and if the Resurrection Body of our Lord expresses a Risen self, then it may be expected to fulfil the varying purposes which may on occasion arise. The whole period of the forty days represents a kind of half-way house, a time of accommodation or weaning of the disciples from the fellowship of sight and touch to new forms through the Spirit in the Church.

If the Tomb taken by itself is dumb, the Appearances without the Tomb would be empty. The stress may be laid upon their 'objective' character ('telegrams from Heaven' [Keim]; 'veridical visions' [Selwyn]), or they might be described as 'subjective' hallucinations. The latter explanation is not satisfactory in its own right since it is difficult to find the necessary element of 'wish fulfilment' present which alone would make it plausible. The disciples were not expecting a Resurrection. Nor would it account for the permanence of the Easter faith, which extends to a Paul and even to the present day. It is, however, their connexion with the Empty Tomb which assures us of their objective character. These two strands in the evidence interlock and supplement each other.

(c) **The Change in the Disciples themselves.** This is familiar ground to the Christian preacher, but it is none the less important. During the Passion this particular job-lot of humanity had hardly distinguished themselves. One denied, another betrayed and the rest forsook Him and fled. They were left stunned by the events of Holy Week, looking nowhere very certainly, but not in the direction of an expected Resurrection. Yet a few weeks after the Resurrection Peter is not only still found in their number, but even laying the blame for Jesus' death squarely where it belonged, in the city of his own shame and his Master's death ('Whom ye slew and hanged upon a tree, Him hath God raised up' [Ac 2^{23-24}]). Clearly a major miracle in the moral and spiritual sphere has taken place. It continues with Paul who was, it seems, outside the immediate sphere of impact of our Lord Himself. The process is further repeated every time men are confronted by the Crucified and Risen Lord and surrender themselves to Him. Some objective ground in historical fact is required to account for these facts. Theories of pious mistake, fraud or hallucination cannot afford a satisfactory explanation. That given by the Apostolic Christians is still by far the most satisfactory.

Taken together these three streams of testimony provide the evidence upon which our faith in the Resurrection rests. Each supplies what the others lack and they key in to each other in a remarkable way. 'A three-fold cord is not easily broken.'

2. Conclusion

In this article the view has been assumed and briefly defended that the Resurrection is a historical event for which the testimony given in the Gospels is sufficient. Others, however, prefer to describe it as 'metahistorical.' If this merely means that an event too big for history has somehow got into history, then the adjective, though ugly, is tolerable. If, however, it implies either that the ordinary laws of historical evidence are suspended, or that it is impossible to apply them satisfactorily to the tradition, then in my judgment it becomes dangerously misleading. Those who (like Bultmann) interpret the Resurrection in an 'existential' context have rightly seized the importance of the third strand in the evidence, but are in danger of taking their stand too narrowly upon a single fine point. That history and faith interpenetrate here is true enough; it is simply the general question of the relation of fact and interpretation 'writ large' in a particularly crucial case. History would point to certain surprising events which took place at Jerusalem and still challenge the ingenuity of human interpreters. Faith without history would go lame and tend to lose itself in vague generalities about the immortality of the soul. The gospel message includes both history and faith, and proclaims 'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.'

Devotional and Pastoral Classics

Mother Julian's 'Revelations of Divine Love'

By the Reverend Denis Lant, Edinburgh

The appearance of a new book in these days is accompanied by a flood of what we have irreverently come to call 'publishers' blurb.' The author's name is displayed in an arresting way, a list of his previous work is given, and then the publisher sets to work to advertise the author and the book. Inured to this method, it is refreshing to find an author who did not even trouble to add her name to her manuscript. *Revelations of Divine Love* stands or falls by the quality of its contents. There is no name to tell us who witnessed this outpouring of God's love.

Fortunately, however, the scribe who copied the first manuscript made a few notes about the author. Writing in the year 1413 he says, 'Here is a vision shown by the goodness of God to a devout woman, and her name is Julian, who is recluse at Norwich.' She has been identified as the anchoress who had a cell adjoining the Church of St. Julian, from whom she evidently took her name. We know nothing else of her. She was a woman of one book only, but into her one book, with considerable literary skill, she put her visions and the thoughts which God had given her on them.

She tells us how she had desired of God three graces: 'The First was mind of His Passion; the Second was bodily sickness in youth, at thirty years of age; the Third was to have of God's gift three wounds . . . that is to say, the wound of very contrition, the wound of kind compassion, and the wound of wilful longing toward God.' There is no doubt that she specified the age in order that her sufferings might as far as possible be conformed to those of her Lord. She did not, however, desire anything against God's will, for she said, 'Lord, Thou knowest what I wish and if it be Thy will that I have it. But if it be not Thy will, good Lord, be not displeased; for I will nothing but as Thou wilt.' The answer to her prayer came suddenly on 8th May, 1373, which was the third Sunday after Easter. She was then, she tells us, 'thirty years old and a half.' She was struck down by a severe illness and became steadily worse until on the Wednesday she received the Last Sacraments, and on the seventh day she tells us that her body was 'dead from the middle downwards.' The parish priest was sent for and he came bearing a Crucifix which he held before her. Her sight seemed to be going, and in the darkness she could see nothing 'save in the Image of the Cross whereon I beheld a common light; and I wist not how.' She thought now that she was actually dying, but suddenly her pain was taken from her and looking at the Crucifix she saw that the red blood appeared to be trickling down under the crown of thorns on the head of the Crucified. From four o'clock until after nine on the Sunday morning she gazed at the Crucifix while fifteen 'shewings' or revelations followed one after another. After the sequence she lost her vision and faith and the severe pain returned, but she was comforted and restored in the sixteenth and last vision, which she experienced during the next night.

It seems that at the time of these 'revelations' she was not enclosed, for, among other things, she speaks of 'those who were with me.' It may probably be as a result of the visions that she became an anchoress, for it was certainly during her enclosure that she thought over them for nearly twenty years and wrote them down together with her thoughts on them.

This bare recital of facts may raise considerable apprehensions. Here is a spinster woman whose bent was solitude, having visions at a time when she believed that she was dying, and calling them 'Revelations of Divine Love.' The stage seems set for sentimental excess and perhaps for that religious eroticism which sometimes appears among women mystical writers. But such fears are completely unfounded. Julian is a quiet, common-sensed and practical soul, who is perhaps best described by one of her own favourite words, 'homely.' Her devotion is centred entirely in Christ, and she says, 'I wanted no other heaven than Jesus, who shall be my bliss when I come there,' but there is no slightest trace of eroticism. Moreover, there are no post-Tridentine vagaries and the Virgin Mary is hardly mentioned except in one of the eighty-six short chapters which make up the book.

Julian is definitely of St. Teresa's view on visions and says, 'Because of the Revelation I am not good unless I love God the better.'

Her approach to God is that of the forgiven, happy child. She has thought deeply about sin, but it does not cloud her happiness or her trust, for she is one of the 'once-born,' as William James would have described her. She says, 'The most

complete joy that we shall have, to my mind, is the marvellous courtesy and homeliness of our Father (who is our Maker), in our Lord Jesus Christ who is our Brother and our Saviour.' In coming to God is all happiness, for ' Full glad and merry is our Lord, for our prayer ; and He looketh thereafter and He willeth to have it because, with His grace He maketh us like Himself, in our natural conditions.' ' It is God's will that we take His behests and His comfortings as largely and as mightily as we can take them.' But homeliness is not to oust courtesy and reverence, ' For our courteous Lord willeth that we should be as homely with Him as heart may think or soul may desire. But beware that we take not his homeliness so recklessly that we neglect courtesy. For our Lord Himself is sovereign homeliness, and as homely as He is, so courteous He is : for He is very courteous.'

She knew aridity, however, for she says ' There was no comfort nor any ease to me but faith, hope and charity ; and these I had in truth, but little in feeling.' Prayer is to be persevered in against all difficulties, for God's word to us is, ' " Pray inwardly, though thou think it suits thee not ; for it is profitable, though thou feel not, though thou see nought ; yea, though thou think thou canst not. For in dryness and in barrenness, in sickness and in feverishness, then is thy prayer well-pleasing to Me, though thou think it suit thee nought but little. And so is all thy believing prayer in My sight." ' Julian adds ' God accepteth the goodwill and the travail of His servant, howsoever we feel.' Yet we are to persevere without strain and over-anxiousness : ' It pleaseth Him that we work both in our prayers and in good living, reasonably with discretion.' Moreover, we must go on our way ' Rejoicing more in His complete love than sorrowing for our frequent failures.' We are reminded of how Baron Von Hügel counselled his niece concerning her spiritual life.

In the first revelation Julian learned God's goodness and care shown to us all through the Holy Trinity : ' Also in this He shewed a little thing, the quantity of an hazel-nut, in the palm of my hand ; and it was as round as a ball. I looked thereupon with eye of my understanding, and thought . " What may this be ? " And it was generally answered thus : " It is all that is made." I marvelled how it might last, for methought it might suddenly have fallen to nought for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding : " It lasteth and ever shall for that God loveth it." And so all-thing hath the Being by the love of God. In this Little Thing I saw three properties, the first is that God made it ; the second is that God loveth it ; the third, that God keepeth it. But what is to me soothly the Maker, the Keeper, and the Lover, —I cannot tell ; for till I am Substantially oned to Him, I may never have full rest nor very bliss : that is to say, till I be so fastened to Him, that there is right nought that is made betwixt my God and me.'

Because God is eternal, He is utterly reliable : ' He never changeth His purpose in any manner of thing, nor shall forever.' He says, ' " See, I am God. See, I am all thing. See, I do all thing. See ! I never lift My hands off My works, nor ever shall, without end : see, I lead all thing to the end I ordained it to from without beginning ; by the same might, wisdom, and love whereby I made it. How should anything be amiss ? " '

God's eternal purpose and working are nothing else than love : ' I saw that God never *began* to love mankind : for just as mankind shall be in endless bliss, fulfilling the joy of God as regards His works, even so the same mankind hath been in the foresight of God known and loved from eternity in His rightful purpose.' ' " Would'st thou know thy Lord's purpose in this thing ? Know it well : Love was His purpose. Who shewed it thee ? Love. What shewed He thee ? Love. Wherefore shewed He it thee ? For Love. Hold thee therein and thou shalt know more in the same. But thou shalt never know therein any other eternal thing." Thus was I taught that Love was our Lord's purpose.'

So there is no wrath in God, for like Donne and William Law, Julian is convinced that if wrath rather than love could ever be found in God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ would have been taken from us : ' For I saw no manner of wrath in God, neither for short time, nor for long, for in truth, as to my sight, if God might be wroth for a single moment, we should never have life, nor stay, nor being.'

Sin is present everywhere ; it is ' behovely,' and the word at once reminds us of the writer to the Hebrews who tells us ' in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.' Her meaning seems to be that it conforms to God's purpose here and now. But sin has no real existence. It is not eternal, like love, but is here as a temporary trial and stain which shall finally disappear in the glory of God's love. ' But Jesus . . . answered by this word and said " Sin is behovely (" behovabil " in some MSS.) but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well." ' ' Ah, wretched sin, what art thou ? Thou art nought. For I saw that God is everything : I saw not thee. And when I saw that God does everything that is done, I saw not thee. And when I saw that God does everything that is done, less and more, I saw not thee. And when I saw our Lord Jesus Christ sit in our soul so gloriously and love and like and rule and guard all that He has made, I saw not thee. And thus I am sure that thou art nought.

And all those that love thee and like thee and follow thee and wilfully end in thee I am sure they shall be brought to nought with thee and endlessly confounded. God shield us from thee!'

With the certainty of God's love and the certainty that sin is finally nothing, she can therefore trust in confidence that 'all shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.' 'And therefore when the judgment is given and we are all brought up above, then shall we clearly see in God the secret things which are now hid from us. There shall none of us be stirred to say in any wise, "Lord, if it had been thus, then it had been all well," but we shall say all without question, "Lord, blessed mayst thou be, for it is thus; it is well; and now we see verily that everything is done as it was then ordained before that anything was made."'

It seems astonishing that this beautiful little book was completely lost for two hundred years and that it is only in the last fifty that it has become at all well known. As it has become known, however, it has become loved, for Julian's experience of God's love was so balanced, so perceptive and so sensitive that she captures her readers by her whole-heartedness and communicates to them something of the experience which she herself had when Christ spoke to her and said, 'Lo, how I loved thee.'

Until we are able to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of that love in His presence, we may comfort ourselves with Julian's assurance, 'He said not, "Thou shalt not be tempested, thou shalt not be travailed, thou shalt not be distressed": but He said, "Thou shalt not be overcome."'

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

By the Reverend John G. Williams, M.A., S.P.C.K., London

One year towards the end of the summer I went to stay with some friends in the heart of the country. By the time I arrived at the little country station (where two members of the family were meeting me) it was already quite dark. My friends knew the whole countryside like the back of their hands, so of course they didn't bother about torches and we set off home in complete darkness.

There were two ways home. One was round by the road, which was about three miles, but of course dead easy. The other was a short cut across some rather boggy fields, which was only a little over a mile. We were all very hungry and supper was calling, so we decided to take the short cut. The path was a rather narrow one running along the edge of the fields, with a ditch full of water on one side and the rough ploughed fields, sticky with mud on the other. My friends said: 'We had better go along in single file with you in the middle.' Then I could just follow the man in front and be reasonably sure of keeping on the path; and if by any chance I did lose touch with him for a moment and start wandering off across the field or show a tendency to take a header into the ditch, then the man behind could grab hold of me and steer me back on to the straight and narrow way! So that is how we did it. These two made a sandwich of me, so to speak, and we set off through the dark fields. I had no idea where we were going. I just trusted myself entirely to them and we eventually arrived home without mishap.

There are plenty of other situations you can think of where it is useful to be in the middle, so to speak, of two more experienced people. If three people are climbing up a mountain, roped together, then the best climber will go first. He works out the best way up the next stage and goes as far as the rope will allow. There he digs himself in and makes the rope secure, and then the middleman follows him up, using all the various crevices and footholds that the first man has already tested. But the point is that, if he should happen to slip, then the leader can see to it that he is securely held by the rope; and there is always the man behind to lend a hand too.

There is a fine old prayer in the Anglican Prayer Book for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity which seems to me to be picturing God in that sort of way. It is as if God is, so to speak, going on in front of us, mapping out the route and guiding us along the right way and seeing that we know where to put our footsteps; but at the same time it is as if God were also following behind us, so that if we do meet with any difficulty or mishap He is there at hand to help us. In fact it is as if we were surrounded on all sides by God's presence and help and power—or (if you like to use the theological word for it) God's 'grace.' The word 'grace' really means God Himself giving us His guidance and help; and if we are prepared to accept His guidance and welcome His help then we can be quite sure of keeping to the right road instead of wandering off and getting lost.

Let us say that prayer now, to finish with—but

first you might like to notice one thing about it, and that is the old-fashioned use of the word 'prevent.' When we talk nowadays about 'preventing' people we mean that we stop them from doing something—we get in front of them so as to hinder them. The Latin word *praevenire* which gives us our word 'prevent' means just that—to go in front. But in the days of Shakespeare, when our Bible and Prayer Book were first printed, the old word 'prevent' still meant to go on in front, not to hinder but to guide. It meant, in fact, to act as a guide, in just the kind of way we were thinking about just now. But notice that this prayer asks God not only to go before us but also to follow behind us and keep us on the right path. Here it is—and it is a lovely prayer for all of us to say every morning of our lives :

'Lord, we pray thee that thy grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*'

The Measure of a Man

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., Ph.D., Alsager, Cheshire

'Till we all attain unto . . . the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'—Eph 4^{13} (R.V.).

Infant schools are puzzling places. What would you think if you went into a room and found carefully written on the blackboard, 'Josephine is 34, but John is 37 ?' By the wall, of course, the teacher had stuck a chart and the children could stand against it and find out how tall they were. They were having their first lesson in measurement, and so they could only think of inches—feet and yards, rods, poles and perches belonged to a distant world they had not in their innocence glimpsed.

Not long after, I found myself in another class of much older children. The blackboard was covered with complicated fractions, and the demonstration desk was full of saucepans and milk-bottles and jugs. One child was pouring water from a quart jug into those little milk-bottles you have for your morning break. *Some* of it went into the bottles ! I asked the teacher what was happening. She told me, with a pitying look at my ignorance, that they were proving that there are six one-third pints in a quart—all very difficult. They were doing it by measuring.

As I went home I began to think of the many ways we have of measuring people. The tailor does it with a tape measure. The doctor sticks a thermometer in your mouth, or asks you to put out your tongue. The schoolmaster does it by marking your essays or your examination papers. Later on, your prospective employer will do it by asking you questions about your attainments and your hobbies. They are all measuring us in different ways, for height and size in shoes are not the only standards. We need to know how honest a man is, how loyal, what is his character.

During the Crusades the mighty Sultan Saladin captured a noble Christian knight, Sir Hugo of Tabarie. The Sultan told him that he could have his freedom if he would pay a hundred thousand pounds. Brave Sir Hugo laughed and said that he had not half that sum.

'Go home to your friends,' said the Sultan, 'and see if they will give the money. If they will not, then on your return you must die.' 'But how do you know that I *shall* return ?' asked Sir Hugo. 'You are a Christian,' said Saladin, 'and therefore I take your word.' There was a wonderful sequel to that story which we may learn another time. But for now the important point is that the measure of a Christian man is his trustworthiness. If he gives his word, people ought to know that it is his bond.

In Trafalgar Square, London, there are metal strips let into the stone wall. They are the standards by which inches and feet and yards are measured in this land. If you want to test your three-foot rule, take it there and you will know whether it is accurate. It wouldn't be much good if we had to say, 'My three-foot rule is nearly as long as Mr. Smith's, but a little longer than Mr. Brown's.' We should soon be in as big a mess as they were in Amos' day when they made 'the ephah small and the shekel great.'

But what we refuse to do with weights and measures, we cheerfully do with human character. We say, 'Oh, I am more honest than X, and I am not unfriendly like Y.' But that is no standard at all. There is only one measure by which to test our lives—the perfect life of Jesus Himself. And when we test our lives by His, we all fall miserably short.

Once in the Fleet Street coffee-house the literary gentlemen of last century asked what would happen if Shakespeare, or Milton, or Spenser walked in. They gave all sorts of clever replies. Then Charles Lamb, with that little stutter of his, broke into the conversation and said, 'If He of whom I am thinking came in just now, we should all be dumb and would fall and touch the hem of His garment.' Yes, the measure of a real man is the 'stature of the fulness of Christ.'

What is Your Tartan ?

By the Reverend John R. Gray, V.R.D., B.D., Th.M., Glasgow

'Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John . . . they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.'—Ac 4^{13}.

Do you have a school uniform ? I'm sure you do and that you are very proud of it. Recently I

visited a school for boys in Scotland at which the uniform is a little unusual. All the boys wear the same kind of jacket, stockings and cap, and they all wear kilts, but in one way they are all different, for the kilts they wear are of all sorts of different tartans in accordance with the clans to which they belong. If I had known a little more about the various tartans I could have looked at a boy and known right away that he was a Stewart or a Graham or a Campbell or a Buchanan. Originally, of course, that was what tartan was for, so that friend and foe alike might know to which clan the Highlander belonged. I felt quite envious of the boys in their nice kilts. Those of us who don't belong to any clan have just to wear any colour that happens to be available. The colour of our clothes does not tell people anything about us—at least not our names.

There are some things, of course, they can tell just by looking at us. They can tell, very often, who our fathers and mothers are, at least if we resemble them. Sometimes they can tell what country we come from by our clothes—an American boy by his knickerbockers, a French boy by his beret, and so on. Most important of all, it is not too hard to know if we are real Christians or not. If we are, if we really are Christ's boys and girls, we shall be truer, kinder, braver, more cheerful than others. These things are the uniform of Christ's soldiers and, if we wear it, people will take knowledge of us—as they did of Peter and John—that we have been with Jesus.

The Christian Year

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Rest in Weariness

BY THE VERY REVEREND GEORGE JOHNSTONE JEFFREY, D.D., GLASGOW

'Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well.'—Jn 4^6.

How close this brings Christ to us! The Son of God could be tired like ourselves! We know that there were situations in life where we cannot follow Him. He silenced the angry waves. He raised the dead. Or we hear Him saying 'I do *always* the things that please God.' And remembering how often we have hurt the heart of God and vexed His Holy Spirit, we know how wide is the gulf between Christ's spiritual victories and our sorry failures.

On the other hand, there are deep experiences we *can* share with Him. When the dark cloud descends upon our spirits, it is helpful to realize that Christ had His own dark moments. 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful and what shall I say?' Or in our worst crises, when we are visited by the ultimate doubt, when for instance, we are bowed down by the mystery of sad, untimely bereavement, we know that He also had His moment on the Cross of utter God-forsakenness. And on the more ordinary level it should heal some of our lassitudes to know that He also could feel for His fainting disciples and invite them to 'come apart and rest awhile.'

There are various kinds of human weariness on which Jesus has always a healing word to say.

First of all there is *the weariness of uncontrolled desire.* James Martineau has movingly described this nostalgia in one of his prayers. 'Till we rest in Thee and freely yield our will to Thine there is in us nothing strong and nothing holy and we do but weary ourselves chasing the shadows of selfish desire.' This is one of the hardest lessons youth must learn. 'Youth,' says Stevenson, 'lives in whoops and circles.' It is here, there and everywhere in pursuit of happiness. But this hectic pursuit with its ever recurring nausea and the reactions that bring leanness to the soul—this is not life but waste of life. The experiment has been tried from the beginning of time and the end has always been weariness, satiety, self-despising.

Now how does our Lord cure this weariness? By a paradox. *Only a holy obsession can purge an unholy.* And the base obsessions that can ravish the human heart are legion. Christ brings the soul to an irrevocable choice—a choice that 'poisons all meaner choice for evermore.' What a discovery it is when we know that we were never made for 'liberty,' as our undisciplined minds conceive it. Such is the 'liberty' of the autumn leaf that flutters to the earth on its way to decay and death. And the Christian ideal must become the predominant passion of our lives or it is worthless. Spinoza was known as 'the God-intoxicated man.' St. Paul said 'to me to *live* is Christ.' Like a tidal wave sweeping through his life, this love of Christ carried him through every kind of heart-sinking and defeatism to a career that was its own exceeding great reward. Here is the eternal paradox of the life in Christ. In Wesley's words we may often be weary *in* His service but never *of* it.

Again Christ has much to say on *the weariness that is the nemesis of the self-centred life.* Look back to this incident by the well-side. On the disciples' return, they expected to find Jesus famished and exhausted. But, lo! when they returned He was talking eagerly. Body and spirit seemed strangely replenished.

There had been no miracle or only the miracle that can happen to the poorest of us when we forget our own needs in ministering to those of others. Jesus Christ tired as He was to breaking point had been busy saving a woman's soul and in that high preoccupation His own necessities have been forgotten. This is Christ's open secret of deliverance from the burden of self-pity and self-regard.

Robertson of Brighton has a flash of insight when he is dealing with a problem that troubles many a Christian—the assurance of forgiveness. And there are more of these people about than we conceive. He says, 'If ever you devoted yourself to another's happiness or amelioration, so far and so long as you were doing *that*, you forgave yourself.' In every aspect of Christian living, here is our Lord's sovereign rule and remedy for deliverance. 'He that will hoard his life shall lose it and he that will spend his life for My sake shall abundantly find it.'

There is another kind of weariness that men encounter. *It is the often baffled search for an honest faith.* Of David Livingstone it was said that, when he came to any unknown river, he could not rest till he had traced it to its source. There is a similar noble curiosity in all the greatest spirits. 'This sore travail hath God given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith.' God did not give us our minds that 'they might fust in us unused.' This is a burden you cannot fasten on any other man's shoulders still less can you leave it in the keeping of any so-called infallible Church. Lessing said that if he were offered the truth in the one hand or the search for truth in the other he would unhesitatingly choose the latter. Such a travail is often hard to bear, and never more than in our own day of frustration and seemingly meaningless suffering on an appalling scale. We think till the brain is weary and the heart sick.

Has Christ any word for this kind of weariness? We are sure He has. The tragedy of suffering was ever before Him as He walked this earth so that He knows ours to the uttermost and regards our case 'with a brother's eyes.' Does He not know the strain that seeking for an honest creed puts on the mind of every thinking man? These are ever apposite words of the author of *Ecce Homo*: 'Surely we ought to be as tolerant of an imperfect creed as of an imperfect practice. It is quite as hard to think rightly as to act rightly. It is monstrous that Christ who was called the friend of publicans and sinners should be represented as the pitiless enemy of bewildered seekers after truth.' Christ has the same perennial sympathy to-day as He had of old for the man who cannot attain to a creed any longer or any more honest than this, 'Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.'

Lastly, Christ has a final word to say to *the weariness of oft-recurring defeat.* To each of us in this life is appointed our solitary battle and if the truth were known it never rages more fiercely than in the inner life of many whose outward lives are a seeming advertisement for earthly success. Some one has said that most of us lead lives of quiet desperation. We are wearied to the heart of us in the unequal strife.

Is there not rich spiritual suggestion for us in the thought that Jesus, being wearied with His journey sat thus by *a well*? In our climate the idea of thirst carries no fear with it. In Eastern climes the finding of a well could be a matter of life and death. Here are Christ's words—spoken with utter confidence to the man who is often beaten to his knees—'The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.'

On the Ayrshire coast there is a well named the 'Mine-Mouth Well.' Twice a day the salt brackish sea submerges it but ever as the tides recede there emerges once more the fresh cool stream, refreshing, undefeated.

What a symbol of our life in and with Christ! We have known the weariness of our futile conflict with our besetting sin and weakness. All the waves and billows of temptation and passion go over us at times and the idea of our becoming men after God's own heart sounds sardonic and engenders cynicism. But if there is one thing true in heaven or on earth it is this. By the grace which is in Christ our lives are one long series of recoveries and restorations and replenishments and reinstatements. *And will Christ change His habits with us?*

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Man Who Was Left Behind

BY THE REVEREND JAMES MUNN, M.A., GLASGOW

'For this cause left I thee in Crete.'—Tit 1^5.

We have little enough to go on for our picture of Titus. He was a Gentile; he was one of Paul's converts; and he carried two letters from Paul to the Church in Corinth. When he was posted to Crete it was as if he had been relegated from the First Division, promoted downwards.

Not but what Crete had its own claim to fame. It was an island of smiling, prosperous cities. It had a civilization earlier than that of Greece. There the Minotaur, half-man, half-bull, had devoured yearly the choicest young men and women of Athens, until Perseus slew it in the labyrinth. But compared with Corinth, Ephesus or Rome, Crete was a backwater, a dead end. If you were young and tough and keen, to miss the other centres of conflict and be tied to Crete would leave you wondering what you had done to earn such a sentence. If you have ever missed a top grade appointment or had to reconcile yourself to a place or condition which you never wanted, you will know how Titus felt in Crete.

1. *But Titus in Crete was a symbol and promise of a new day for the island.* To be sure, Crete was small and isolated. The traffic of the imperial highways never touched its shores. It was out of the main stream of Roman culture. There was no

doubt about it, if you asked for the spectacular, if you worshipped the colossal, Crete was no use to you. But Titus the Christian believer, Titus the ambassador of Christ, represented an incalculable force which could transform the whole place. Had not Christ Himself said, 'The kingdom . . . is like unto leaven . . . hid . . . till the whole is leavened?' It was something vital which would reach out and penetrate and remake everything. Have you realized what you represent, with your faith in Christ and your fellowship with the unseen?

Suppose in the very dawn of the world you had confronted two forces: here an earthquake toppling the mountains and rending the earth; and there a tiny piece of protoplasm, fragile and unsubstantial. Which of these would you have called the formative, decisive, creative force? Or, suppose that in Jerusalem you had watched Pilate and Jesus: on the one hand Roman law and justice, Roman might and rule—solid, powerful, permanent. On the other hand Jesus, mocked, spat upon, lonely, friendless: who would have given twopence for His prospects? But He split the centuries! He swept over the empire of Rome! He flung the light of mercy and love and faith into the farthest and saddest darkness! He called from the unseen ramparts of eternity that over there all is well!

And any situation will be decided by the factor with the force of the universe and the vitality of God in it. That was why Titus mattered in Crete. So you too with your faith in God, with your prayer, and your faltering loyalty, you represent this force which can penetrate and affect everything around you. You are set there to be the very focus of the presence of God, the word of God, the victory of God—and that should make a difference.

2. *It was a signal mark of honour for Titus to be left behind in Crete.* Paul knew that Crete was a difficult handful; its reputation was pretty low. 'One of themselves said, "The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow gluttons."' This was bound to make it hard going for any reformer. A half-baked idealist would be no use at all. Crete would take one of the best. Now Paul wanted to be sure that when he was fighting hand-to-hand battles for Christ elsewhere, the ground he had already won would not slide back out of his grip. So he trusted Titus to build up in Crete the pattern of sound church life, to hold his bit of the line—and somewhere else the advance would go on.

If a man knows that down the line the advance is moving well because he is not letting up, he will put his best into his own bit. Loyalty in a remote corner is often the key to resounding success farther along the line. Just when Wavell had chased Rommel to Benghazi part of his forces were despatched to Greece. There all through April, 1941, step by step, through the passes and the plains, they fought a superior power on land and in the air. Sleepless, they retired through that endless month, until they were evacuated from those grim rocky shores. It all seemed so worthless. But afterwards we learned that the courage of that campaign so delayed the main German attack through southern Russia to the oil of the Caucasus, that it had to halt before the winter, and the major objective was foiled.

Were you thinking it did not matter whether you stood firm or let up? Were you saying yours was such an unimportant sector that no one would notice you? But you have been left in charge of a bit of the line; and it would be poor satisfaction that elsewhere the banner should go forward if the enemy should break through where you are. Hold fast then. Let nothing wreck your loyalty. It is part of the overall strategy of your Commander that you be posted just there. And remember, He visits the whole line daily.

3. *The real builder of the Kingdom of God in Crete was not Paul but Titus.* Paul certainly went there; his passionate oratory and his powerful arguments produced their impression. Like a flashing meteor, he drew men's gaze and applause. Yet these were not the gifts which rooted the Church in the island. That was done by the steady, patient zeal of Titus, the tact and leadership of the man who was left behind.

Of course, that is the basis of every lasting cause. An empire was to be built for Britain, and Drake would claim the riches of the Spanish main, and Cook would circle the globe and plant the flag in Australia and the islands of the Pacific. Such were the pioneers. But the men who won the empire were the colonists, the merchants, the farmers, the ministers, who *settled* in the new countries and built there the laws and customs and faith of the homeland. When a political ideal is to be preached, some forceful orator will arrive to expound it and appeal for it. But once he has gone, the real work will be done by local men who do not move on out of the reach of criticism and attack.

So the Kingdom of God depends even more on the fidelity of those left behind than on the brilliance of some passing prophet. No matter how high his fame or how noble his gifts, ultimately the quality of the rank and file will determine the vigour and vision of the Church. And so, in the office you hold in your church, in the worship you give in the sanctuary, in the prayers you make for the work, you can do for your church what Titus did in Crete. 'Less than the least of all saints' you may count yourself; but Christ's Kingdom stands and grows to victory because you do not fail.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Iconoclasm

BY THE REVEREND D. H. C. READ, D.D.,
NEW YORK

'And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.'—Mk 14^3.

On the 30th of March, 1945, I smashed an image ——quite literally and with the same instinct that has moved all the iconoclasts of history. It was the day I was liberated from a prison camp. I walked into the office of the German Commandant, ripped a large framed portrait of Hitler from the wall and smashed it on the floor. I'm not particularly proud of that action. I might have been if I'd done it the day *before* I was liberated. But for an instant I understood what King Josiah felt, and John Knox felt, and a few days later I saw that this instinct had possessed the whole of Europe as the images and portraits of the Führer were everywhere obliterated and destroyed. Iconoclasm is as strong an instinct to-day as it ever was. We have seen it on the pictures only a few months ago: in Hungary a gigantic bronze Stalin toppled from its base; in Suez the Egyptians dynamiting the statue of the constructor of the Canal. Everywhere political and national passions find vent in the destruction of an image, a symbol of that which is hated or feared.

This, then, is a live subject. We all have an iconoclast couching in our breast. Normally we keep him tamed. We stand ashamed before the desecration of priceless works of art carried out in a time of violent religious emotion. Yet here is a powerful instinct we must understand and learn to use. It has surely been given to us, like every other instinct, for a true and proper use.

Iconoclasm is in the Old Testament as a commandment of God. Again and again there is a movement to infiltrate the worship of Jehovah with graven images. The prophets, speaking the name of God, blasted these cults with a withering scorn, and urged the people to tear down the images and the groves that enshrined them. 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, . . . thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.'

What can you do when you find yourself with an idol, an idol that has drawn away your devotion from the infinite God, an idol that you have come to love because it is somehow under your control? There is only one answer—iconoclasm. Smash it. There are times when God calls us to the clean break, the irrevocable decision, the extravagant and uncalculated action. There was no evolutionary method for King Josiah to get rid of the worship of Baal. The corrupting influence of the cult could only be dealt with by a religious revolution. Not until the last image had been ground to powder and the groves razed to the ground was the way clear for a return to God. So it was when Jesus entered the Temple at Jerusalem and saw the clutter of commerce and religious racketeering that surrounded the sanctuary. He didn't suggest a programme of education in worship, or draft a 'Keep Jerusalem Clean' campaign. 'When he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple.'

Well, what about *our* idols? We never knelt before a statue to say our prayers. And so we write off the Second Commandment as one, at least, that we have never disobeyed. But are we so sure that the man kneeling by a statue is an idolater? Perhaps his prayers are reaching beyond that image to the one true God, while we ourselves, standing on our feet, are mentally bowed before the portable idol of our pocket-book. An idol is anything—good, bad, or indifferent—that has come between us and God. Idolatry lies not in the shape of the image but in the attitude of our hearts.

If you have ever wandered through a museum and examined the images and idols of the different cults, you must have noticed a profound difference between those that attracted you and those that repelled. So it is with all the idols that tempt us to-day. Some are frankly and recognizably bad: others are in themselves not only harmless but good.

The bad idol is, of course, easily recognized—if not so easily dealt with. We can recognize some habit, some vice that rears up like a graven image of sin between us and God. We cover it up and seek to give our total worship to our God, but in the dark recesses we know it is there claiming our devotion, our time, perhaps our money. We pretend to ourselves that the idol can be tamed—just a little homage now and then. But we know there is only one answer—iconoclasm. And there is no greater iconoclast for this kind of idol than the One who cleared the Temple. That is why we seek the companionship of Him who is able to steel our wills to resist and fill our minds and imaginations with the Divine love that rocks every evil idol from its base.

But it is the good idols which work the most subtle danger to our faith. There are habits, material things, enthusiasms, passions—quite excellent in themselves—which can usurp the worship of Almighty God. *Whatever* comes between us and our loyalty to God, *whatever* hinders our growth 'into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' is an idol. Of all the good idols we might think of we select one—conventional Christianity. Let us see what it is and what it does.

It is an alabaster box. The woman in the story had this alabaster box of precious ointment. There was nothing whatever wrong in having such a box. On the contrary it was a symbol of a good and pious household—the ointment was for the religious purpose of burial. It represented the devotion and reverence of the family over many generations.

Our conventional Christianity is the focus of our devotional life—in the individual, the family, or the nation. It has come down to us as the heirloom of generations of faith and service. In our own lives it means that precious deposit of belief and practice that keeps us going. In the life of the city and nation it means the familiar pattern of our church activities—without which society might well disintegrate. Could it possibly be an idol?

Well, one day that woman decided her box was an idol. Or at least when she met with Jesus Christ she saw that there was one way to show that no one and nothing on earth was more precious than He. 'The dearest idol I have known. . . .' It certainly was her dearest possession, and if it was an idol it was a *good* idol. But in one supreme moment of inspiration she became the most famous iconoclast of history. 'She brake the box, and poured it on his head.'

Let us not judge this incident from the safe perspective of sacred history but put ourselves to the test of having been there. Would we have applauded this woman or not? Whatever we would have said there is no doubt about what Jesus said. He said, 'Let her alone.' As always He welcomed the generous impulse, the extravagant act. (Have you ever noticed how few of the characters in His parables behave with conventional common-sense?) In His eyes the woman had done the right thing.

It is not every day that a man or woman is called on to make such a gesture. It is not every year that the Church is summoned to break the idols of convention. But when the world is on the march, when spiritual forces wrestle for the soul of man, when traditional ethics are losing their grip on sections of the community, then the time has come to break the pattern of convention, and to smash the idol that may be hiding from us the Person of the living Christ. Is the framework of our church-life, the strategy of our evangelism, the commitment of our lives and means sufficient for the hour we live in?

The iconoclasm that is called for to-day is not so spectacular as that of King Josiah rampaging through the groves of Baal. But it can be equally effective. It means being willing to break the alabaster box of conventional Christianity, to see with fresh eyes the task to which we are called, and to expand our thinking as to the depth of our commitment to the cause of Christ. Our Lord still loves the unusual act, the faith that risks, the generosity that goes beyond all calculation.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Strength that is Sufficient

BY THE REVEREND R. LEONARD SMALL, D.D., EDINBURGH

'My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.'—2 Co 12[9].

Here is one of the famous 'great' texts of the Bible which are coming into their own again under the strain and stress of modern living. An old divinity professor in Scotland used thus to address his students: 'Gentlemen, when you go into a charge of your own, and look down on your own people from your pulpit, you will be often tempted to assume that they all look contented, successful, prosperous, without a care in the world. Keep constantly reminding yourselves that this is never the case. Under the seemingly placid surface of their lives are running strong currents of desire, fear, worry, perplexity. There is far more real need there than you can ever measure, and now and then some of it will be revealed to you.' That professor is dead and gone these twenty-five years, yet his words are truer than ever. It is to this need that the message of this old text is directed.

God offers each of us the kind of *strength that constitutes real security*. What a crying need is this need for security, and how perpetually we are made aware of it! To what shifts men will resort to insure against the risks of life, to make it safe, to feel secure! The Bible leaves us in no doubt as to the centrality of that need, and the only way of really meeting it. The Psalms are full of phrases like these: 'The Lord is my rock, my refuge. The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe.' This latter phrase is an almost literal description of the way in which the City of Edinburgh grew up around the Castle on its rock. When the city was no more than a cluster of poor hovels straggling down the slope now known as the Royal Mile, huddling under the shelter of the great rock, at the first warning of danger the inhabitants had their security at hand, a strong tower into which they could run and be safe. But where to-day in this changing and frightening world can one find real security, and feel truly safe? Under thirty feet of reinforced concrete, and probably not even there. That is where our faith comes into its own afresh. 'A safe stronghold our God is still'; 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee'; 'thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies'—phrases like these begin to haunt the minds of this generation, to remind us that sanctuary is the true security. In a book on

submarine warfare against the Japanese, *Run Silent, Run Deep*, the writer gives us a perfect illustration of this reality. The one condition essential for a submarine to make a successful attack and have a chance of getting away was to have plenty of water under her keel, for the only security when the enemy counter-attacked was to go deep, so deep that the depth charges could not reach you ; when you went deep enough you were safe. Go deep, down to the strength, the sanctuary, the security of God—such is the message of this text.

God offers a kind of *strength that is exactly related to the demands of life*. What an important question this is, and how much it has to do with happy and successful living. Mr. Micawber's philosophy has real truth at its heart : ' Annual income £20, annual expenditure £19, 19s. 6d.—result, happiness. Annual income £20, annual expenditure £20, os. 6d.—result, misery.' How the ordinary day-to-day demands of life pile up, eat into and exhaust our income of peace of mind, patience, efficiency, resiliency of spirit. How very easily our little world can become like an iceberg drifting into warmer waters, at a moment's notice it can turn upside down, and instead of my being on top of my world, it is on top of me. Paul continually insists that the strength of God is equal to all the cumulative, ordinary demands of life. But what of the extra, unexpected, incalculable demands ? So many people to-day are living without any margin of safety, up to the limit of their income, or strength of body, mind or spirit, with nothing in reserve against any extra demand. The first Televised Church Service in Scotland was from St. Cuthbert's Church, Edinburgh, and it was technically manageable because, being a large church, it had a three-phase supply of electricity to carry its normal load, and it was able to take the extra. When a similar Service was held in a smaller church a special installation had to be made, because its single-phase supply, enough for normal demands could not take the extra load. So Paul insists, from his own experience, that if God steps up the load that is laid on any of us, He will also step up the supply of strength. All through the Epistles you will find the interplay of ideas that are present in this text—enough, sufficient, equal, able. Balancing one another, and belonging together, we find constantly these statements : ' I am able—He is able.' How Paul builds up and amplifies the thought of the sufficiency of God ! ' He is able to build you up ; able to make you to stand ; able to make all grace to abound ; able to subdue all things unto himself ; able to save even to the uttermost ; able to keep that which I have committed unto him.' God offers us a strength that is equal to all the demands of life.

God offers a kind of *strength that may sometimes be made perfect in weakness*. In this particular passage Paul is clearly referring to his mysterious, oft-recurring illness, his thorn in the flesh. Three times he asked to be relieved of it, not merely out of a selfish desire to be free from its pain and misery, but rather from a longing to be no more handicapped by it in his service for Christ. God's answer was, in effect : ' In your weakness my strength comes into its own.' How realistic that is, and how challenging ! God often leaves us with the burden and the difficulty ; the ache, the problem, the dilemma remains, till one does not know how to go on, and loses the feel of God's love, and wonders if He has become quite uncaring. Yet one can be led, like Paul, to a deeper experience and a rarer faith, because God's strength comes into its own in our weakness. A year or two ago a business man in the U.S.A. was driving himself to breaking-point, flying to this and that business conference, handling great affairs and costly issues. Suddenly he was struck down, paralysed hand and foot, unable even to speak. Very slowly the power came back a little, and one day he said to his minister : ' You know, the Lord had done all He could to make me stop and think, slow down and realize that my real life did not consist in the business I could do, and the dollars I might earn. This was the only way He had to say to me : " Be still, and know that I am God." ' That man is still paralyzed, but he is a much stronger and bigger man than he was before. At Christmas that year he sent to his friends and former business associates a Christmas card with this poem, author unknown :

He prayed for strength that he might achieve ;
he was made weak that he might obey.
He prayed for health that he might do great things ;
he was given infirmity that he might do better things.
He prayed for riches that he might be happy ;
he was given poverty that he might be wise.
He prayed for power that he might have the praise of men ;
He prayed for all things that he might enjoy life ;
he was given weakness that he might feel the need of God.
he was given life that he might enjoy all things.
He had received nothing that he asked for, all that he hoped for ;
his prayer was answered, he was most blessed.

Thus did one man discover, amid the strain and stress of modern living, so can we all discover that God's strength is still made perfect in our weakness.

Contributions and Comments

Psalm lxxiv. 14

אַתָּה רִצַּצְתָּ רָאשֵׁי לִוְיָתָן
תִּתְּנֶנּוּ מַאֲכָל † לְעַם לְצִיִּים †

THE usual emendation of the grammatically anomalous לְעַם לְצִיִּים is Immanuel Löw's לְעַמְלֵצֵי יָם * 'to the sharks of the sea.' This, however, is not without its own difficulties. In the first place, עַמְלֵץ * is made to do duty for אַמְלֵץ * ; secondly, אַמְלֵץ * itself would properly mean no more than 'slippery (one),' the more precise 'shark' being a mere inference. I would therefore suggest that the correct reading is לְעִפּוֹלְצֵיִם, *i.e.* לְעוֹף וְלִצִּים, 'to fowl and to jackals.'[1] In support of this suggestion it may be observed that (*a*) the letters פ ו, if written close together, are indeed virtually indistinguishable from מ in the script of the Dead Sea Manual of Discipline and of the Hymns of Thanksgiving ; and (*b*) an exact parallel may be found in the description of the fate of the Dragon (*Tannin*) in Ezk 29[5] (cf. *ib.* 32[4]).

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[1] Cf. *Arabic ḍaywan.*

The Eastern Way

AT the risk of revealing a Western mind, may I suggest that the Rev. G. F. Mobb's interpretation of the David-Bathsheba incident in the April number of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES is incorrect.

It seems to me that the whole point of the history is to bring out 'David's conduct in the blackest colours, set against unqualified nobility in Uriah.' The king is shown as committing a crime of tyranny comparable with Ahab's over Naboth's vineyard ; and as capitulating utterly before the remonstrations of the prophet Nathan—an example of royal submission too striking to neglect.

It is of the essence of the story that Uriah is entirely right throughout.

(1) Few Israelites would have agreed that Uriah should have pardoned his wife's adultery and accepted David's child as his own. Adultery was regarded more seriously in Israel—as we see in the next narrative, especially in 2 S 13[12].

(2) Uriah's reason for refusing to go down to his house was not churlish resentment but high-minded religion (2 S 11[11]). He was sanctified for war and might not join his wife (cf. Ex 19[15], 1 S 21[4]).

(3) I think it highly unlikely that David's transgression was widely discussed at the time of Uriah's recall. Rather, it became known when Bathsheba's pregnancy was noticed. (No doubt Nathan's bold confrontation of the king was aided by widespread dissatisfaction in the army, and perhaps David's rapid submission was due to the same cause.) Had Uriah any inkling of the reason for his recall he would have had ready supporters for an open protest.

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Recent Foreign Theology

Review of Old Testament Periodical Literature. Another issue of the *Internationale Zeitschriftenschau* has made its appearance.[1] It reviews all the articles bearing in any way on the Bible, which have appeared in no less than four hundred and twenty-five periodicals. The titles of all such articles are given, and in the vast majority of cases there is a brief abstract of the contents of the articles. Altogether no less than 1495 items are listed, covering the years 1954–55. The entries are classified, so that any one interested in a particular subject can quickly see what articles relevant to his interest appeared in the given years. A large international team of scholars is engaged in the preparation of the abstracts, and all students of the Bible are put under a heavy debt to them for an indispensable tool. Every good theological library should have it, and scholars working in other fields must envy the student of the Old and New Testaments in having such a valuable survey at his disposal.

[1] *Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete*, III. Heft 1–2 [1956]. Patmos Verlag, Düsseldorf ; DM 34.

Another New French Translation of the Bible. The first volume of a new French translation of the Bible, covering the Pentateuch and the historical books down to 2 Maccabees, has been issued.[1] There is a long and valuable Introduction, extending to more than a hundred pages, from the pen of the distinguished scholar E. Dhorme, who is responsible for the translation of all the books down to 2 Chronicles. F. Michaéli is responsible for Ezra and Nehemiah, and A. Guillaumont for the Books of Maccabees. It will be observed that the order of the Roman Catholic Bible is being followed. At the foot of the page a short commentary is supplied by the translators. The volume is beautifully printed on thin paper, so that though it contains more than eighteen hundred pages, it is of a very convenient size. Occasionally, as in 1 S 14^{41}, the reading of the Septuagint is taken into the text, though in 1 S 6^{19} it is put in the notes, although it appears to be regarded as superior. In the Introduction to the Pentateuch, Professor Dhorme distinguishes between the narrative and legal sections of the Priestly Code, and holds that the narrative sections of Genesis come from a genealogist, distinct from the compiler of the Priestly Law. He assigns Deuteronomy to the year 622–621 B.C., and holds that the other books are older, with the exception of some parts of the Priestly Code. The translation is both scholarly and graceful, and the Introduction and notes reflect the judgment and learning of the authors.

H. H. Rowley

Manchester.

[1] *La Bible :* Tome I., *L'Ancien Testament*, i. [1956]. Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris.

Entre Nous

God's Adventurer

It is on record that a certain small boy made a most revealing remark after listening to one of the great Old Testament stories. 'God,' he said, 'must have been much more exciting then.' If anyone wants to see how exciting the service of God can be in the twentieth century, let him read *The Small Woman* by Alan Burgess (Evans Brothers ; 16s. net). Here is a book which indeed is the final proof that truth is stranger than fiction, for if this book had been written as a novel it would have been dismissed as impossible.

The small woman is Gladys Aylward who was less than five feet tall. She was haunted by the idea of going to China as a missionary. She volunteered, and was accepted for training, but the academic part of the training was quite beyond her, and she was told that the Society to which she volunteered was very sorry, but was quite unable to use her. She had to do something for her Master, and, when she was twenty-six, this tiny soldier of Christ became a 'Rescue Sister' in the Swansea Dock district, and dealt efficiently with prostitutes and drunken sailors. But still China beckoned ; she could not earn money as a 'Rescue Sister' so she went into domestic service. When she entered domestic service she possessed two pennies and one halfpenny. She took her Bible and put her twopence halfpenny on the top of it, and prayed : 'Oh, God, here's my Bible ! Here's my money ! Here's me ! Use me, God ! '

When she had amassed three pounds she went to a travel agency to buy her ticket for China by instalments. The cheapest sea fare was ninety pounds. By railway over land it was forty-seven pounds ten shillings. Well, she would go that way. But, the booking-clerk told her, there was a Russian-Chinese war on, and the Trans-Siberian railway was impossible. She insisted that he should book her to China by the impossible railway. The booking-clerk grimly protested : 'We do not like to deliver our customers—dead ! ' She got her booking all the same. By 1930 she had saved enough money to pay for the ticket, and on 18th October she left from Liverpool Street Station possessed of ninepence in cash and one traveller's cheque for two pounds, plus a large box of food to eat on the way. In due time she arrived at the borders of Manchuria, where the railway ran into the war area—and stopped. Gladys Aylward proceeded to walk.

Eventually she got to China *via* Japan ; and somehow or other she arrived at Yangcheng, where she was to assist a missionary called Jeannie Lawson, who herself was five feet tall and seventy-four years of age. Success was slow because contacts were few. So the two women had the brilliant idea of opening an inn called the Inn of the Eight Happinesses. They got their initial

customers by literally dragging them in. But soon the inn was popular. The Chinese love stories; and Gladys Aylward would tell the stories of Jesus to the guests in the inn.

In due time Jeannie Lawson died. But Gladys Aylward's astonishing career went on. The Chinese government had decided to abolish the binding of children's feet; and, astonishingly, the Mandarin of the district appointed her his foot-inspector at a salary of one measure of millet and a farthing a day! Here indeed was a chance—and Gladys Aylward took it.

Somehow there sprang up an amazing friendship between the stately Mandarin, with centuries of Chinese culture behind him, and the little ex-parlourmaid from Belgravia. One day the prison governor sent for her; there was a riot in his prison and convicts were murdering each other with choppers. He was helpless. As if it was the most obvious thing in the world, he asked her to go into the prison and stop the riot. 'If I went in,' she said, 'they'd kill me!' 'How can they kill you?' said the governor, 'you tell every one that you have come here because you have the living God inside you.' Here was the challenge. Discard her faith now, and she could discard it for ever. In she went, and at once she had these murdering convicts reduced to order, like school children.

Time went on, and even the Mandarin was converted to Christianity, and publicly confessed his faith. Then came the Japanese. A great part of Gladys Aylward's work had been with abandoned children. The Japanese beat her with rifle butts; but indomitably she collected a hundred children, led them on a twelve-day march to the Yellow River, managed a crossing when there was no transport to be had, went from camp to camp until she brought them to safety.

She herself nearly died from her injuries. But Gladys Aylward is still alive. Mr. Burgess writes of her: 'To Gladys her God was a suit of chain-mail, proof against any arrow or bullet the mortal world could fire at her. Her faith was durable; it was like a warm blanket on a cold night, medicine when she was sick, food on the table, a roof over her head, a bed on which she could lie enfolded and secure.' As a theologian she was a failure; as her letters show not even her spelling was very safe; but Gladys Aylward has shown the world what one woman who had nothing to give to Christ but herself can do.

Here is a Christian 'Odyssey,' and it has lost none of its thrill in Mr. Burgess' vivid telling of it. We lay down this book half in shame at our own half-hearted committal to Christ, and half thrilled that God's exciting days are not yet over.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

1957-58

Devotional and Pastoral Classics. Throughout the year this series will continue monthly. In addition to the titles given in July is Von Hügel's 'Letters to a Niece,' by the Bishop of Croydon.

Paul's Certainties. During the past months a number of articles have appeared in a series entitled 'Expository Problems.' In these some difficult but important texts have been reconsidered and expounded. The response to this series encourages us to arrange further expository studies. The new series is to be called *Paul's Certainties*, and will be based on some of his affirmations which begin with the words: 'We know,' 'I am persuaded' or 'I know and am persuaded.' We hope that a consideration of these explicit utterances of personal faith will prove of equal value to the series just completed.

Other Features. Articles which we hope will be helpful are being arranged on *Retreats*.

During the year also there will be a number of contributions by *foreign scholars*. In October Professor Jeremias of Göttingen writes on *The Saying of Jesus about the Bridge*, and in November Professor Aland on *Luther as Exegete*.

Starting with October 'In the Study' will include a short series by the Rev. Douglas Stewart on *The Paradoxes of the Ministry*.

Among important single subjects will be a discussion of the *Gospel of Truth* by Dr. C. K. Barrett. Though overshadowed in popular interest by the more exciting and better publicized finds by the Dead Sea, the discovery of very ancient gnostic texts at Nag-Hamadi, in Egypt, is nevertheless of very great importance to all students of the history of the second century, and especially of the early use and interpretation of the New Testament. The so-called 'Gospel of Truth', apparently a document of Valentinian origin and dating from about A.D. 150, has now been edited by M. Malinine, H. C. Puech, and G. Quispel, and will undoubtedly provide much scope for debate.

If there is a change in the texture of the paper, cover and text, this will be the result of a general increase in postal charges. Faced with the alternatives of doubling the postage or using a lighter paper, we have chosen the latter. We hope that the change will be but a temporary one. There is no reduction in the amount of reading matter.

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